CHRISTIAN REUNION

A PLEA FOR THE RESTORATION OF "THE ECCLESIA OF GOD"

FRANK SPENCE

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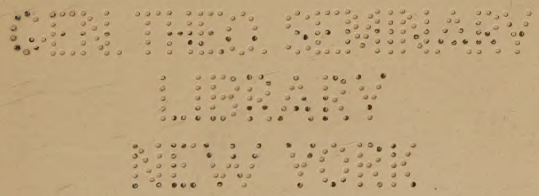
BY

FRANK SPENCE

"Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof."—*Paul to "the Ecclesia of God which is at Corinth"*. (*1 Cor. xii. 27.*)

"In whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit."—*Paul to "the saints which are at Ephesus"*. (*Eph. ii. 21, 22; see also Rev. ii. 1.*)



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PREFACE

If all the countless reasons for Christian union were baseless fancies, except the great outstanding fact that on the eve of Calvary Christ four times prayed that His people may be "one," should not that alone impel us to study His will upon the matter with reverent and unbiassed minds?

But if our loyalty to Him needs to be reinforced by other considerations, can we not find them in a glance at His dismembered "body,"[1] and the effects [1] of its disunion in any centre of population in our "Christian land" to-day?

The war of sects and strife of tongues which have rent England in twain on the education question and brought deep discredit on the Christian name; the failure of our many dissociated efforts to uplift "the submerged tenth," and to create a tide of Christian public opinion that would sweep away the temptations to drink, gambling and the social evil which are blighting so many of our race; the spiritual torpor of the many Churches whose main concern is apparently to keep the institution going and make both ends meet; the feebleness of our divided tribes in presence of the growing materialism, pleasure worship, agnosticism and sacerdotalism of the age; the humiliating

[1] 1 Cor. i. 13.

thought that whereas, as a unit,[1] we could dictate a righteous home and foreign policy to both political parties, each of them now safely regards us as a negligible quantity; the painful feeling that (whilst the missionary field "white already unto harvest"[2] has not a tithe of the workers needed to evangelise the world) at home much toilsome labour is wasted because unco-ordinated, and the amelioration actually effected is attributed mainly to "civilisation" instead of to Christian effort—these and numberless other melancholy consequences of our tribal chaos should surely lead us to consider whether the separatist régime, which we mechanically inherit and transmit, has the approval of Christ, the one divine Head of "the body" recognised by us all.

The following fragmentary and incomplete argument for the restoration of the apostolic Ecclesia is submitted by the writer under the conviction that its main conclusions have been forced on him by a providential leading extending over forty years of business life and close association with religious and philanthropic work in one of our largest cities; and that (in gratitude for a life full of merciful deliverances and lovingkindnesses) it is his duty to publish it, if only to help to draw increased attention to a subject of measureless importance to mankind.

If the attempt to point out the divine remedy for the sundered membership of "the body of Christ" should, in each town and village, induce only "two or three" of His people[3]—unitedly and with whole-hearted abandonment to "the Spirit of truth"[4]—to investigate for themselves (*a*) the great constitutional principles of the New Testament organisa-

[1] Col. iii. 15. [2] John iv. 35. [3] Matt. xviii. 19, 20. [4] John xvi. 13.

tion, (*b*) whether in the nature of things their adoption to-day would not everywhere reunite and "knit together in love"[1] the "members of the body,"[2] thereby fulfilling the prayer "that they may be perfected into one, that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me,"[3] he will be far more than rewarded for the effort.

The Bible references are to the Revised Version.

The Bible quotations are also from that Version, or its marginal readings or renderings; obsolete archaisms being, however, replaced by modern English. In every case, for the many important reasons discussed at length in the book, the Greek word "*ekklesia*," rendered "church" in the Authorised and Revised Versions, is left untranslated.

All Greek words are printed in English characters to enable non-classical readers, by means of such excellent works as Gall's *English and Greek Concordance of the New Testament*, to readily check the Greek citations.

The object of the small marginal figures, similar to those in the text opposite them and to those fronting the footnotes, is to carry the eye, when caught by a footnote, to its text connection.

A word is necessary to explain the large number of the footnote references. The argument of the book is that if the apostolic Ecclesia were restored, Christian reunion and its innumerable blessings would inevitably follow in its train. To attempt to maintain such a thesis without the fullest and most conclusive Scripture evidence would be to carry conviction to few minds. Hence, in citing passages,

[1] Col. ii. 2. [2] 1 Cor. xii. 12. [3] John xvii.

it has been assumed to be better to err by excess rather than by defect.

My Father passed away on 29th December, 1907, after a brief illness, his revision of the MS. being practically complete.

H. S.

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[1] Ps. cxxii. 4.

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CHAPTER I

SCIENCE AND "THE ECCLESIA OF GOD"

1, Science *versus* prescription and tradition. The Ecclesia constitution not scientifically investigated. 2, Theological doctrines freely and widely discussed. Governmental questions shelved by sacerdotalists and Erastians. The Reformation opened the Bible and gave rise to various Free Church denominations. 3, Each denomination chose and fixed its governmental system. Various views of denominationalism. 4, Christ's army now two alienated camps.

It is related of Bessemer, after his famous process had revolutionised the steel manufacture, that he used to say he never could have invented it had he been brought up an iron-master. This typical remark reveals with startling clearness the gulf between inherited prejudice and the truth-thirsting scientific spirit.

To the Christian statesman and philanthropist it is therefore deeply gratifying to reflect that, in the world at large, in almost every field of thought and effort, the scientific animus has been aroused, that knowledge of all kinds is being formulated, and that there is an increasingly eager search for the laws and principles everywhere immanent in the universe of God.

In one quarter of the horizon, however, where *a priori* truth might have been assumed to be supreme, and law to be fundamental and of the *esse*, we see an institution, ages ago entrusted by its divine founder with the promotion of the greatest, highest, most glorious human interests; and yet

1 whose constitution as "the Ecclesia of God"[1] has remained uninvestigated by writers and authorities on governmental science.

In the still higher sphere of the facts and truths of Christianity itself, it is remarkable that, from the very beginning, there has been such free and widespread discussion of principles as to produce, as far back as the early decades of the 2 fourth century, a virtual consensus[2] on every important doctrine of the Christian faith.

We shall see later how the State establishment of religion not only gave new life to sacerdotalism but introduced into the Church an era of political intrigue and bitter persecution; and how this policy, reinforced ere long by the burial of the Scriptures in dead languages, finally ushered in the long "dark ages" of Christianity, during which the manliness of the European nations was at its nadir and many "Christianised" countries were either overthrown by savage races or overwhelmed and desolated by Mohammedan hordes.

During that long moral eclipse the hierarchs, secure in the possession of wealth and power, would have been more than human had they encouraged the study or discussion of such questions as that of the governmental principles of the New Testament Ecclesia.

We know how for a thousand years "heavy burdens and grievous to be borne" were laid "on men's shoulders," until at last, by the help of God, the Reformation burst the bonds of the spiritual and political tyranny of Rome, and presented the Scriptures to every European nation in its mother tongue. History shows us how that great emancipation gave

[1] It may here be noted that in the New Testament the apostolic organisation is twelve times so designated: Acts xx. 28; 1 Cor. i. 2; x. 32; xi. 16; xi. 22; xv. 9; 2 Cor. i. 1; Gal. i. 13; 1 Thess. ii. 14; 2 Thess. i. 4; 1 Tim. iii. 5; [illegible]i. 15.

[2] With the exception of Arianism.

rise to various non-Erastian denominations; and how these so enlightened the races which received the truth as it "is in Jesus,"[1] that to-day every Protestant nation is full of life, 1
growth and moral power, whilst those not yet liberated are degenerating and losing that fear of God which constitutes the true backbone of a people.

But can we say that the Protestant denominations have unbiassedly investigated the great governmental principles of the organisation founded by the apostles and prophets? In a qualified sense only can we affirm this. These tribes of the spiritual Israel had their origin, for the most part, in a necessary revolt from ecclesiastical tyranny when, under pressure of conviction, they were constrained to bear witness to some great truth[2]—at times perhaps to the exclusion of others 2
only second in importance. Once formed as a denomination, each naturally acquired a vested interest in the particular system of Church government it had adopted; and this it would soon come to regard not only as a settled question but as one of its distinctive glories. Denominational tradition and prescription, saturating the atmosphere of the family, the Sunday school and the Church, have thereby passed so insensibly from parent to child, that it is notorious nine out of ten of us to-day are Anglicans, Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists or Presbyterians because we were so born. Probably no state of mind is so intractable as the inherited attitude to facts and truths: usually some remarkable providential experience is necessary to break its lifelong spell.

There are, however, numbers of Christians who, seeing each of the denominations bearing spiritual fruit, have concluded that one Church organisation is as valid as another; and

[1] Eph. iv. 21.

[2] Did not Christianity itself give birth to the greatest of all sects, "the sect of the Nazarenes"? (Acts xxiv. 5; xxviii. 22).

that in fact the New Testament does not prescribe any definite constitution for the Christian society. But this half truth has for centuries been opposed by the champions of the various denominations who have broken lances in controversy; each attempting to prove that his particular system has the strongest claim to be *the* Scriptural organisation!

Many also assert that organisation is a matter of indifference, and that all we lack is more earnestness, more dependence upon the Holy Spirit. That we would receive a much larger outpouring of "the Holy Ghost whom God hath given to them that obey Him," if we were more loyal to His commandments, goes without saying. But when we are told that the organisation of "the house of God, which is the
[1] Ecclesia of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth"[1]
[2] —Christ's own instrument[2] for bringing sinners to His feet and keeping them there—is of no consequence, we feel impelled to ask the self-answering question, "Does God give us power out of steam without the engine; or law, order and civilisation in a nation, without organisation?"

Had the question of the constitution of "the Ecclesia of God" merely furnished an unfailing subject for Christian polemics for all the Christian centuries, it might well have been left to the tribal spheres of the sectaries who have so long and resultlessly argued over it. But when we reflect that it to-day divides Christ's army into two great Episcopalian and non-Episcopalian camps acting apart from each other in spiritual, social and political matters—thereby bringing deepest discredit upon His cause and immeasurable loss of influence and power for good in the world—we are impelled to change the venue and appeal to science, with the open Bible in her right hand and the closed book of 1,800 years of

[1] 1 Tim. iii. 15. [2] Matt. xvi. 18.

tradition and prescription in her left,[1] to tell us whether the 1
"Leader and Commander" designed this situation, or whether
on the contrary the plan of His organisation [2] embodies great, 2
far-reaching, consummately wise laws and principles of
government, which, if only loyally and faithfully carried out
by His followers, will in every place draw together into one
the *disjecta membra* of the body of their glorious Head and
King.

[1] Is not the true course to wing our way across the Serbonian bog of early Church "history" till we alight on the rock of Scripture? No wise architect, desiring to ascertain the plan of an ancient building of unparalleled strength and magnificence, would waste much time over the paltry superstructures which had been successively erected on its site, but would go down to the original foundations which were known to have been left intact.

[2] Eph. ii. 20; 1 Cor. iii. 9, 10; xii. 28.

CHAPTER II

THE LAYING OF THE FOUNDATIONS

6, The governmental principles of the Ecclesia would inevitably secure Christian union. The analogy between God's two books. 7, Christ committed to His followers the proclaiming of "the glad tidings". In each city evangelised, His apostles formed their converts into an "Ecclesia of God". Under divine guidance, they planned its government on infinitely wise and strong lines. 8, The Ecclesia Local and the Ecclesia Universal. Christ referred to both Ecclesias. All evangelical Christians agree as to the Ecclesia Universal. Their non-agreement on the Visible Ecclesia is the cause of separatism. All who yearn for reunion should study the Ecclesia constitution for themselves. 9, Apostolic precedent embodies apostolic principle.

THE following pages will be devoted to a brief, and necessarily inadequate, study of the great administrative principles of the New Testament Ecclesia, an endeavour being made to show that these constitute a contribution of immeasurable value to governmental science, and that if they are only reverently and intelligently investigated by Christians in our own day they will, without touching a slate on a denominational roof, directly secure that union of His followers for which Christ
1 so fervently and repeatedly prayed.[1] In entering on the discussion of these governmental principles, it may be desirable to state some preliminary propositions.

That God's two volumes for man—the book of Nature and the book of Revelation—everywhere show the immanence

[1] John xvii. 11, 21, 22, 23.

of "the reign of law". That, as many of the laws and principles which prove the wisdom, knowledge, power and beneficence of God in nature do not lie on the surface, but have to be deduced by careful scientific research, so in the case of Revelation, many of the glorious laws and principles of the "Father of lights with whom is no variableness neither shadow that is cast by turning" can be discovered only by humble scientific investigation.[1]

That Christ, after dying on the cross for sinful men, committed to His followers the great work of proclaiming the glad tidings of eternal life in Him;[2] and that His inspired witnesses and agents the apostles, in every centre of population evangelised by them, gathered their converts together and organised them into an "Ecclesia of God,"[3] *i.e.*, a "body" of members having direct relations with Him as "Head".[4]

That as He intended His Ecclesias[5] to be planted in every land and clime, and their membership to be drawn from men of all races and temperaments; and as He foresaw that in the coming centuries enemies would arise from within as well as without[6] to spiritually enslave or to persecute the flock for which He died; it was to be expected that the "Leader and Commander" of the world's greatest and most glorious movement should guide His apostles to plan the government of His community on the very wisest and strongest lines. In other words, it was most fitting and appropriate that He, who "knew what was in man" and who legislated for all time, should give His blood-bought "bride" —"the Ecclesia of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth"—the best constitution that divine laws and principles

[1] "The works of the Lord are great. Sought out of all them that have pleasure therein" (Ps. cxi. 2).

[2] Rev. xxii. 17.

[3] 1 Cor. i. 2; 2 Thess. i. 4.

[4] 1 Cor. xii. 27; Col. ii. 19; iii. 15; Rev. ii. and iii.

[5] Rom. xvi. 16.

[6] Acts xx. 29, 30.

could produce or the ultimate science of government could devise.

Further, as these communities of re-born men under the headship of their invisible King were to form a nobler brotherhood than the world had ever seen, a divinely planned administration, far in advance of anything developed by Greek or Roman civilisation, seemed necessary to give their liberty, equality and fraternity in Him the fullest, freest and most harmonious play.

That besides Christ's visible organisation which, from its invariable local autonomy (as we will presently see), might be correctly termed the Ecclesia Local, there is the plainest Scripture evidence of the existence of a great mystical Ecclesia, a vast community "which no man could number,"[1] composed of every member of His body militant and triumphant—the Ecclesia Universal—"the general assembly and Ecclesia of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven".[2]

Attention should here be drawn to the fact that the Gospels record only two mentions by Christ, on earth, of His Ecclesias by name:[3] one of them, "Upon this rock I will build my Ecclesia,"[4] referring both to the Ecclesia Universal and the Ecclesia Local; and the other, "If he refuse to hear them, tell it unto the Ecclesia,"[5] pointing only to the latter.

Now since all sections of evangelical Christians are agreed on their conception of the invisible or mystical Ecclesia, but

[1] Rev. vii. 9. [2] Heb. xii. 23.

[3] In the Revelation, however, He, speaking from heaven, refers to the Ecclesia Local very many times (chaps. i.-iii.).

[4] Its *foundation*. In Matt. xvi. 16-18 we are shown that a heartfelt confession of trust in God's anointed Saviour transforms lost sinners into "living stones" (1 Pet. ii. 5) and makes them one with Him the Rock on which, as a community, they are built.

[5] Its *preservation*. In Matt. xviii. 15-18 we are pointed to Christ's divine method for preserving each Ecclesia from the internal divisions which are the one great peril to its life and growth.

are largely at issue on the question of the character and constitution of *the visible organisation* launched by the apostles, it seems incumbent on each follower of the Master—who laments the separatism resulting from these differing views, and who hears the conviction soberly expressed that federal, tribal (but nevertheless complete organic) union was fully and definitively planned for in the apostolic organisation—to lay aside every preconceived idea and open-mindedly examine the New Testament evidence on this momentous subject for himself.

At the very threshold of the question, however, there lies another: that of the authority of apostolic precedent in matters of organisation. On this subject Mosheim remarks, "If, however, what no Christian can doubt, the apostles of *Jesus Christ* acted by divine command and guidance; then that form of the primitive Churches, which was derived from the Church of Jerusalem erected and organised by the apostles themselves, must be accounted *divine;* yet it will not follow that this form of the Church was to be perpetual and unalterable".[1]

Would it not be more correct to say, Not the "form" of the Ecclesia, but the great constitutional *principles* it embodied were the foundation which the apostles laid "by divine command and guidance"; and upon which all Christians afterwards were privileged to build? And if they acted by divine "guidance" and therefore on divine principles, are not their acts, *as apostles*, to guide us as well as their words? It is plain that they claim to be not only teachers[2] but patterns.[3] After Christ's ascension they erected a monument to their King and Lord which will last till "there shall be time no longer"; they transferred the Sabbath as

[1] *Ecclesiastical History*, p. 32. Edition A.D. 1878. Tegg & Co., London.
[2] 1 Cor. iii. 10; xi. 2; 2 Cor. xiii. 10; Gal. i. 6, 9; Phil. iv. 9; 2 Thess. ii. 15.
[3] 1 Cor. iv. 16, 17; xi. 1; Phil. iii. 17; iv. 9; 2 Thess. iii. 7-9.

"the Lord's Day"—the day on which He rose from the dead—from the last day of the week to the place of supreme [1] honour, the first.[1] They have left us no injunction on the subject, but what Christian will hesitate to follow their Spirit-prompted lead in the matter?

In 1 Cor. xvi. 1 and 2 we learn that Paul introduced into the Ecclesias of Galatia the practice of personal "Lord's Day storing" (or laying by on His day a proportion of our [2] income for God[2]), which has proved such an unspeakable blessing to all givers who have adopted it. After thoughtfully reading that passage, can we doubt that the practice of these Ecclesias was meant to be a precedent also for our- [3] selves?[3]

In the Old Testament, albeit we find no direct injunction to man to marry only one wife, did not the fact that God made one husband and one wife (to which Christ points us in Matt. xix. 4, 5, 6) clearly reveal the Father's will and thus the law on the subject for His children?

In like manner, although the record of the *pre-Mosaic* period contains no definite commandment to keep the Sabbath, it tells us emphatically that "God blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it: because that in it He rested from all His work [4] which God had created and made,"[4] and thereby made the keeping holy of the Sabbath a law for man.

It is a profoundly suggestive fact that, in organising His [5] evangelisation work, Christ sent forth "the twelve"[5] and [6] afterwards "seventy others"[6] "by two and two". Had our modern missionary societies realised *from the beginning of their* [7] *labours* (as, evidently, did their prototypes the apostles[7]) the immense practical value of the principle underlying that

[1] Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 2; Rev. i. 10. [2] 1 Cor. xvi. 2.

[3] If the apostles were the inspired founders of "the Ecclesia of God," should not the "acts of the apostles" *as such* be regarded as models by all loyal, law-loving, orderly minds?

[4] Gen. ii. 3. [5] Mark vi. 7. [6] Luke x. 1.

[7] Acts iii. 1; xiii. 2; xv. 39, 40; 2 Cor. viii. 23.

policy,[1] it would not only have prevented the collapse of many [1]
a worn-out toiler on the foreign field, but have immeasurably increased his power for service during life. Here, as in numberless other melancholy instances in the history of Christianity, the moral is forced upon us that finite wisdom should be reinforced, nay preceded, by profound reverence for the *precedents* made for us by Christ and His appointed witnesses.

Obviously then His divine *example*, whether personally or through the acts of His inspired agents the apostles as such, has, for His disciples, all the force and authority of *precept*. And so—accepting the manifest teaching of Rev. xxi. —we conclude that "the twelve apostles of the Lamb" laid the foundations of "the Ecclesia of God" on which all after generations of Christians were to build.

[1] It was not only perceived and emphasised by Solomon (Eccles. iv. 9, 10) but clearly indicated from the creation by Christ, who made man (John i. 3) and his limitations, and therefore knew his need of a human as well as of a divine help (Gen. ii. 18).

CHAPTER III

THE CITY—THE UNIT AND AREA OF ORGANISATION

12, No New Testament instance of a city with more than one Ecclesia. 14, "The Ecclesia in their house" means the headquarters of the Christian community. 17, Christ addresses each Ecclesia as a separate spiritual organism. Paul often does so. 21, Why the phrase "the Ecclesia in their house" so frequently recurs. 23, Denominational Ecclesias, a conception unknown to the New Testament. 26, The New Testament word "city" often means village. The word "village" used only of places in the Holy Land, and never of places having an Ecclesia. 27, Why places having Ecclesias are invariably called cities. The Ecclesia and the city-state. 28, The plan of the apostolic Ecclesia, *inter alia*, embodies two great ideas. 29, As "a city" "set on a hill" that "cannot be hid," its members, being together, can promote each other's highest good, and that of all men. 30, The Ecclesia Local a microcosm of the Ecclesia Universal. 33, Modern churches not city communities; therefore not Ecclesias. The New Testament knows nothing of a national Ecclesia. Anglicans and Congregationalists differently though equally err. 36, "A congregation of faithful men" not the definition of an Ecclesia. Every denomination has a right to the name "Church". 37, But a Church is not an Ecclesia. In a large city an Ecclesia might have many synagogues. 38, The human origin and character of the synagogue.

EVERY Ecclesia or community of believers organised by the apostles, was designed by them to include all the Christians resident in the city or island of population in which it was placed; it being always referred to as "the" (and therefore
[1] the only) Ecclesia in such city.[1] Neither in the case of

[1] Since this truth dawned upon the writer over thirty years ago, he has repeatedly read press reports of the utterances of others whose independent study of the subject had led them to the same conclusion. Without doubt many other minds in the long centuries during which "Ecclesiasticism" has submerged the Ecclesia, have arrived at, and given expression to, the like conviction. God grant that in a matter so important as the organisation of "the Ecclesia of God," and therefore of Christian reunion, these voices, hitherto "crying *in the wilderness*," may now everywhere be heard and prevail!

Jerusalem, where thousands were obedient to the faith; of Ephesus, where Paul's three years' work influenced even the provincial Asiarchs; nor of Corinth, where he had occasion to reprove the spirit of faction, is there the smallest indication that there was more than one Ecclesia.

Under the old covenant, God appointed a tabernacle in the desert[1] and later the temple in Jerusalem,[2] as the place of sacrifice for sin,[3] the meeting-place with Himself,[4] His dwelling-place,[5] in order thereby to symbolise Christ till He came.[6] Around this sanctuary were marshalled all "the tribes of the Lord".[7] Similarly, under the new covenant, He chose the assembly of Christians *in each city* as "the Ecclesia of God,"[8] the "temple of God,"[9] to symbolise the members of "the body of Christ"[10] gathered to Him their Head,[11] through whom, as "the Lamb of God" and the "great High Priest," they are delivered from the guilt and power of sin.

If this view be correct, does it not result that we have buried the conception of the divine community—the "one body" of Christians in a city—beneath a congeries of separate or, in some instances, superficially federated tribal institutions: the gravamen of our offence being the pretension that each denominational organisation, independently of the rest, is an "Ecclesia of God," a Zion, though consisting only of a single tribe?[12]

[1] Exod. xxv. 8; xxix. 43-45.
[2] Deut. xii. 5, 11; Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14.
[3] Exod. xxix. 42, 45; Lev. iv. 13 *seq.*, 27 *seq.*
[4] Exod. xxv. 22; xxix. 42. [5] Num. v. 3; Ps. lxxvi. 2.
[6] John ii. 19-22. Compare 1 Kings viii. 30, 35, and Heb. ix. 9-12.
[7] Num. ii.; Ps. cxxii. 1-4. [8] 1 Cor. i. 2; 2 Thess. i. 4.
[9] 1 Cor. iii. 16; Eph. ii. 21. [10] 1 Cor. xii. 12, 27; Col. iii. 15.
[11] Eph. iv. 15, 16; Col. i. 18.
[12] What a blessing it would be to English-speaking Bible students if in some new edition of the New Testament the word *ecclesia* were left untranslated, thereby compelling every one to investigate the fundamental difference between an Ecclesia and a Church!

There is nothing in any of the five passages referring to
1 an Ecclesia in a given person's "house,"[1] which is in the least degree inconsistent with the postulate that the New Testament knows only one Christian Ecclesia in a city. In every instance the house mentioned was without doubt the central meeting-place or "headquarters" of the community where its general as well as its official meetings were held; being probably in most cases the spacious residence of some well-to-do convert placed at the disposal of the Ecclesia. Owing to persecution in the apostolic age, there would be very few towns where Christians would be permitted to erect or even to rent halls or other buildings for preaching, worship,
2 3 edification[2] or Ecclesia business purposes.[3]

Let us see how far this view is borne out in each of the five recorded cases of an Ecclesia in a house.

(1) In Rom. xvi. Paul commends to the Roman Christians the bearer of his letter, "Phœbe our sister, who is a servant" (or deaconess) "of the Ecclesia that is at Cenchreæ". He next salutes Prisca and Aquila, the hostess and host of the Ecclesia in Rome, next the Ecclesia itself as a whole—"the Ecclesia that is in their house"—and next, numerous in-
4 dividual members and groups of members.[4]

After greeting the last group he enjoins all the Ecclesia
5 members to "salute one another with a holy kiss,"[5] and adds, "all the Ecclesias of Christ" (*i.e.*, the separate city Ecclesias thus far founded) "salute you". That he has mentally before him the entire body of members of the Roman Ecclesia is evident from the sentence which follows: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them who are causing the divisions and

[1] Rom. xvi. 5, 23; 1 Cor. xvi. 19; Col. iv. 15; Philem. 2. [2] Acts xix. 9.

[3] "Till this period (A.D. 211) they had usually held their assemblies in private houses and sequestered places. They were now permitted to erect and consecrate convenient edifices for the purpose of religious worship" (Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, vol. i., p. 371).

[4] Had these latter bodies been Ecclesias Paul would doubtless have referred to them as such. See p. 37. [5] Rom. xvi. 16.

occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned; and turn away from them".

(2) Farther on (v. 23) the apostle says: "Gaius my host, and of the whole Ecclesia, saluteth you," *i.e.*, obviously the whole Ecclesia in Corinth, from which city he writes. As both of Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians are addressed to "the Ecclesia of God which is at Corinth," and as, in 1 Cor. xiv. 23, in referring to meetings of *all its members*, he a second time uses the above-cited expression "the whole Ecclesia,"[1] it is manifestly impossible that there could have been more than one Ecclesia in Corinth.

(3) The third of the five mentions of an Ecclesia in a house will be found in 1 Cor. xvi. 19, where Paul, writing from Ephesus,[2] says: "The Ecclesias of Asia salute you, Aquila and Prisca salute you much in the Lord, with the Ecclesia that is in their house". As Eph. ii. 21, 22 and Christ's own words[3] make it clear that there was only one Ecclesia in Ephesus, it follows that the house of this large-hearted Christian pair was its meeting-place. We have already seen how, when living in Rome, they similarly accommodated the Ecclesia of that city, and Rom. xvi. 4 tells us how deeply indebted to them otherwise were "all the Ecclesias of the Gentiles."

(4) The fourth mention is in the words:[4] "Salute the brethren that are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the Ecclesia that is in their house". Another rendering of this verse reads: "Nympha and the Ecclesia that is in her house"; but whether the rich members of the Laodicean Ecclesia[5] had jointly purchased or hired a building for it, or Nympha had found room for it in her own home, Christ's words[6] demonstrate that there was only one Christian community in

[1] The same phrase, with the same meaning (as applied to the Jerusalem community), occurs also in Acts xv. 22.

[2] See v. 8. [3] Rev. ii. 1. [4] Col. iv. 15.

[5] Rev. iii. 17. [6] Rev. iii. 14.

Laodicea and consequently that its meeting-place was in the above-mentioned house.

(5) We now come to the fifth and last New Testament reference to an Ecclesia in a particular house: [1] "Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to Philemon our beloved and fellow-worker, and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow-soldier, and to the Ecclesia in thy house". From a comparison of various passages in Colossians and Philemon we get much interesting light on this community, and conclude that it must have been the Ecclesia of Colosse.

(*a*) Though a converted runaway slave of Philemon returning to his master, Onesimus has his status settled by Paul's statement that he "is one of you," *i.e.*, one of the Colossian brethren.[2]

(*b*) Archippus was officially connected with the community referred to in both epistles.[3]

(*c*) Epaphras, a member of the Colossian Ecclesia, has special prominence in both documents.[4]

As the *unity* of the Christian community of Colosse is demonstrated by several passages,[5] and especially by the words: "And above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness and let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to the which also ye were called in one body," it cannot be doubted that they were as much an Ecclesia as the Christians of Laodicea who, being near neighbours, are referred to, with them, in that sense.[6] And if, like them, they constituted *the*, *i.e.*, the only Ecclesia of their city,[7] it follows that their headquarters were Philemon's house.

There seems little weight in the suggestion that the letter to Philemon was meant only for himself and a small com-

[1] Philem. 1, 2. [2] Compare Philem. 16 with Col. iv. 9.
[3] Compare Philem. 2 with Col. iv. 17.
[4] Compare Philem. 23 with Col. i. 7 and iv. 12.
[5] Col. i. 2; ii. 2, 5, 19; iii. 11-16 and particularly 14 and 15.
[6] Col. ii. 1, 2. [7] Rev. iii. 14.

munity of relatives and neighbours who assembled in his house.[1] Important considerations point quite another way. 1
Throughout the letter, which pleads so eloquently for the kindly reception and liberation of Onesimus, Paul, Spirit-guided, strikes the noblest chords in Philemon's soul. The appeal to him *in presence of the whole Colossian Ecclesia*[2] would 2
powerfully impel him to glorify Christ by an act which would be honourable in the sight of all.[3] His prominence, 3
as the host of the Ecclesia, made his character and reputation, so to speak, common property ; hence the epistle is addressed both to him and all. This is true also, in a measure, of Archippus who, in Col. iv. 17, is enjoined with equal publicity: "Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it". Again, other Christian slave-owners in the Colossian Ecclesia might be led by Paul's gentle but heart-probing words to manumit their "chattels". Last not least, it was important to put upon record, *in a public, not a private, document*, the mind of the Spirit on the holding of slaves.[4] 4

Everything therefore seems to indicate the identity of the Ecclesia of both epistles and thus its meeting-place in Colosse in Philemon's house.

We may now examine a little more closely the meaning of the expression "the Ecclesia which is in their house". It is

[1] Philem. 2.

[2] Another instance of Paul's profound tact and sagacity! Tychicus carried his epistle to the Ecclesia at Colosse in company with Onesimus who took his letter to Philemon. But the opening sentence of the letter is so worded as to make it virtually a joint communication to him and the Colossian community. Compare Col. iv. 7-9 with Philem. 10, 11, 12.

[3] Rom. xii. 17 ; 2 Cor. viii. 21.

[4] Can any member of those American and South African Churches which neither admit negroes on equal terms, nor make any effective protest against their large deprivation of civil and social rights, read without a tremor Paul's reference to Philemon's slave—"Onesimus, the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you" (Col. iv. 9)?

admitted on all hands that the apostles founded an Ecclesia in every city successfully evangelised by them. Christ's separate message to each of the seven Minor Asian com-
[1] munities, as a living spiritual organism in its particular city,[1] puts this absolutely beyond question. And as these messages demonstrate that every Ecclesia has a visible, conscious, intelligent, morally responsible existence as a body "called out" by Him from the general community, it follows that each of them must have had a common meeting-place to plan and co-ordinate its spiritual work and transact its necessary business as a whole.

The frequently recurring metaphor representing all the Christians of a city as a body of limbs, organs, members, under Christ their living Head, alone precludes the thought that there could be another similar body in the same place. In 1 Cor. xii. 12, for example, we read: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ". The verses following picture this spiritual body and all its organs in harmonious action, and in v. 27 the moral is drawn for the Corinthian Christians: "Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof". Proceeding, Paul enumerates the multitudinous gifts God had bestowed on the members; and then, after a marvellous contrast of love, "the bond of perfectness," with lovelessness, he directs them to the orderly discipline of the gifts of prophecy and of tongues and their interpretation, for the edification of the body, *i.e.*, of "the
[2] whole Ecclesia".[2]

In presence of this unmistakable figure, how unscriptural is the idea of some that *organic* union is impracticable and not necessary for Christian union; in other words, that the trunk cannot and need not be organically connected with the limbs! Does not Christ tell us He is the vine and we are

[1] Rev. ii. and iii.

[2] 1 Cor. xiv. 23; see also Rom. xii. 4, 5; Eph. v. 23; Col. ii. 19; iii. 15.

the branches, adding that apart from, *i.e.*, severed from, Him we can do nothing? If then we are organically joined to Him it is certain that, through Him, we are (*a fortiori* in a city where we are together) organically joined to each other.

If an association of Christians, scattered throughout various nations, can form a denomination because they are at one on one question—usually Church government—what are we to think of the Christians of a city never meeting nor taking counsel together on matters of unspeakable importance, and seemingly quite ignorant of the New Testament fact that they "all are one man in Christ Jesus"?[1] What a travesty this, of [1]
the divine plan; what a scandal in the eyes of "them that are without"!

If it be feared that organic union would destroy the autonomy or self-rule of each denomination, the apprehension is groundless. The New Testament metaphor of the body shows each organ to be under the control of the Head and not of one another. Why therefore should not all the denominations in a city form a federal union under the Headship of Christ?[2] It need scarcely be remarked that the idea [2]
of the Christian community of each city as a body in no way precludes the existence, in various parts of such city, of regularly assembling and locally organised and controlled meetings, whether in private houses or other available buildings.[3] [3]

The conception of the Christian community of a city as a divinely co-ordinated organism, appears in another beautiful figure in Paul's letter to the Ephesian Ecclesia, "in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together

[1] Gal. iii. 28.

[2] What could possibly have brought about the dismemberment of the body under its glorious Head, and that, too, so completely that the apostolic Ecclesia has vanished from the world? We shall see later how the Christians of the second, and following centuries, sold for nought to power-loving men the divine headship of Christ and "the liberty of the glory of the children of God," which was their priceless heritage in Him.

[3] See p. 37 *seq.*

for a habitation of God in the Spirit".[1] This figure is also employed by Paul in 1 Cor. iii. 16, where, after referring to his founding of the Corinthian community and Apollos' subsequent building thereon, he says: "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God"[2] and that "the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" The next verse definitely states that they are "the," *i.e.*, the one, temple of God in their city sphere: "If any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are".[3]

If, in a work on our national institutions, a Chinese student saw it stated that the administration of each town was conducted by *a* town council, he would be right in making a note that "*the* town council" is "*the*," *i.e.*, the only, "governing body of each city and town under the English municipal system". And the truth-thirsting New Testament student will also rightly conclude that *an* apostolic community is "the body of Christ," "the temple of God," "the Ecclesia of God," in its appointed city sphere. We may well ask—"Is Christ divided?"[4] shall "man put asunder" "what God hath joined together"?[5] God forbid!

Some theologians, forgetting that figurative language should not be pressed beyond its intended scope, are shocked at the rendering of the Revised Version, "a temple of God,"[6] "a holy temple in the Lord,"[7] as implying *many* temples.

[1] Eph. ii. 21, 22. Paul's reassuring words to the Gentile Christians of Ephesus, demonstrating with lawyer-like precision their equal citizenship with the Jews in the Kingdom of God, and their glorious status as a temple of God, plainly reveal previous anxious misgivings on their part. See Acts xx. 17; Rev. ii. 1.

[2] "Ye are God's husbandry, God's building" (1 Cor. iii. 9).

[3] See also 2 Cor. vi. 16, where Paul is evidently citing Lev. xxvi. 11, 12, and perhaps Exod. xxix. 44, 45, and Ezek. xxxvii. 26, 27. Elsewhere, as we know, the word "temple" is employed in two additional senses—to symbolise Christ (John ii. 21) and the individual believer (1 Cor. vi. 19).

[4] 1 Cor. i. 13.

[5] Matt. xix. 6.

[6] 1 Cor. iii. 16.

[7] Eph. ii. 21, 22.

What, however, is the leading thought in the statement that a Christian Ecclesia in a city is "a temple of God"? Is it not that every city should have its Zion, like Jerusalem of old? If that be so, then those who so stoutly insist upon *the* temple of God should do their utmost to restore it, in a non-mythical form, to the dismembered *many-templed* Christian community in order that, Zion-like, it may ray out the divine glory in every centre of population.

In this connection it may be noted that the plural of the noun "Ecclesia" is employed in the New Testament over thirty times; the last twelve being Christ's own uses of the word. Does it not follow therefore that every one of the communities referred to was *an* Ecclesia, though at the same time *the* Ecclesia of its particular sphere? And if, as we have seen, "the Ecclesia of God" was "the temple of God," there must have been as many temples as there were Ecclesias. Further, if, in another sense (as we are told in 1 Cor. vi. 19), the body of every individual believer is "a temple of the Holy Ghost," there must be thousands of temples in each of our large cities to-day.

Turning now to the question why the words—"the Ecclesia which is in their house"—are so prominent in the record, a little reflection will show that had they been absent it might have been argued that "the Ecclesia" was simply a mystical conception or ideal; and that the apostles left us neither a concrete Christian organisation nor any *principles* of organisation on which a visible Christian community was to be based; but gave Christians everywhere *carte blanche* to build on their own lines. Indeed, even in presence of the words, and of many other cogent considerations, numbers of Christians maintain this last-named view.

These commonplace words further teach us the important practical truth that any kind of house or building which is suitable for meetings may be a perfect home for "the Ecclesia

of God," even though, after its assemblies disperse, it is put to the most secular domestic use.

History unquestionably shows us that by far the best and purest Gospel work was done in gatherings in the people's homes, by Christians travelling on temporal business, and by [1] other unofficial and unpaid individual effort,[1] before the end of the second century when church buildings began to be erected. One public building in fact seems to have sufficed for all the marvellous conversion and edification work de- [2] scribed in the early chapters of Acts,[2] *i.e.*, the temple. Much [3] of it was evidently done in private houses.[3] Indeed, with many liberal but thoughtful givers to-day, it is becoming a serious question whether our present régime, with its frequent unsatisfactory and declining church attendance, is not yielding the minimum of efficiency at the maximum of cost. As donors who will have to account for their stewardship, they are often in doubt whether they had not better devote more money to foreign missionary work and less to the erection and maintenance—in a land which has been evangelised so long—of costly churches to secure under a "one-man system" the luxurious spiritual ease, in numbers of cases, of the [4] majority of their "members".[4] They see here and there pastors whose college training has qualified them to produce literary and philosophical sermons, but at the same time unfitted them for handling the weapon which alone "is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of [5] the heart".[5]

As regards the costly ecclesiastical structures required by our present-day Christianity, it cannot surprise us if—in presence

[1] Rev. xxii. 17. [2] Acts iii. 12; iv. 4; vi. 7.

[3] Acts ii. 46; v. 42; viii. 3.

[4] See 1 Cor. xii. for a vivid description of the functions of the "members" of "the body of Christ". [5] Heb. iv. 12; Isa. lv. 11.

of the many New Testament passages proving that there is now no earthly "sanctuary" and that Christ, individual Christians, and Christian communities, alone are "the house of God"[1]—the spiritual investors referred to should reject the prevailing superstition which prevents thousands of spacious rooms being let as public halls for all kinds of beneficent and innocent uses, instead of being strictly reserved as "sacred" places for church services for three or four hours per week.

To recapitulate. In each city which contained a vigorous apostolic organisation, whilst there would be numerous *district* gatherings[2] for preaching, worship, exhortation, evangelisation, etc., all the Christians associated with them formed one local visible spiritual community or "body of Christ"; and their oneness was manifested and perfected by their coming together for communion and for conducting (either personally or representatively) the spiritual and temporal business of the Ecclesia as a unit or whole.[3]

The foregoing view of "the Ecclesia of God" will, we believe, be found to harmonise with every New Testament reference to the organisation. In subsequent pages, ample evidence will be forthcoming of the inconsistency with themselves and with each other of different theories which, whilst admitting that the apostles founded one Ecclesia in each city, and that Christ's seven messages,[4] and the Acts and Epistles know only one community, nevertheless variously maintain (*a*) that there may be many Congregational or Baptist *Ecclesias* in one city; (*b*) that all the members of a denomination in the world, or in a nation, or in any local church of such

[1] Heb. ix. 1, 11, 12; John ii. 19-21; Acts vii. 48; 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17; vi. 19; 1 Tim. iii. 15; 2 Cor. vi. 16.

[2] Both the district or sectional and the joint central meetings of a city seem to have usually been held in private houses (Acts xx. 20); but in one case we find them in a school (Acts xix. 9).

[3] Heb. x. 25.

[4] Rev. ii. and iii.

denomination are an *Ecclesia;* (*c*) that all the Anglicans in a country form its national and only *Ecclesia;*[1] (*d*) that the Roman Catholics of all nations united to their "visible head," the Pope of Rome, constitute the one, true, visible, catholic (universal) *Ecclesia!*[2]

For the moment therefore we will content ourselves with affirming: That the New Testament contains no such conception as that of a visible Congregational or Baptist Ecclesia, nor the smallest trace of a visible national or world-wide one, whether Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Greek, Armenian, Coptic, or other.[3] In fine—as a comparison of Paul's direction to Titus, "appoint elders in every city,"[4] with the statement "and when they had appointed for them elders in every Ecclesia,"[5] plainly shows—the city is *the* unit and area of organisation of the apostolic community.[6]

In presence of the many perplexing claims to be *the* Scriptural Church, it cannot surprise us if many Christians are tempted to jump to the erroneous conclusion that the apostles prescribed no definite constitution for the Christian community, but left every Christian body a free hand in the matter. But if the denominations had been profoundly influenced by Christ's declaration, "all ye are brethren,"[7] they would long ago have discovered that they were equal spiritual tribes in Zion,[8] severally members of the one body,[9] and that, however important the function of each limb and organ, the body is obviously greater than any member. "The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob."[10]

[1] *e.g.*, "*the* Church of England," "*the* Church of Ireland".

[2] What but "the truth of God" could for ages have outlived such a rivalry of mutually contradictory organisations for propagating it?

[3] See p. 36 *seq.* [4] Tit. i. 5. [5] Acts xiv. 23.

[6] *i.e.*, city in the New Testament sense, used throughout this book, *viz.*, a local government area or sphere, or island of population.

[7] Matt. xxiii. 8. [8] See p. 157.

[9] 1 Cor. xii. 27. [10] Ps. lxxxvii. 2.

There are other Christians who, admitting that the communities planted by the apostles had a definite administration, nevertheless maintain that it was adapted only for their day, and that accordingly succeeding ages have developed whatever constituency and constitution they deemed best. But is not this sheer "lawlessness,"[1] springing from lack of reverence for the divinely inspired plan? Paul tells "the Ecclesia of God" at Corinth that "according to the grace of God given" to him "as a wise master-builder (*architecton*)" he had laid the foundation of their community as "God's building".[2] Surely no sane man among us believes that our disunion régime has improved on the New Testament organisation, or doubts that our separatism is the chief cause of our comparative powerlessness for good. We would do well here to note how *reverently* Christ settled a strictly analogous question. In Matt. xix. 3-9 He tells us that "from the beginning" God formed our race male and female; that in marriage He made them one flesh; and that what He had joined together no man might put asunder. As there is abounding evidence that *from the beginning* of the Gospel He inspired His agents to organise His followers in each city into one body,[3] is it not plain that by separating and divorcing ourselves in every city into various communities *acting apart from each other* we are putting asunder what He "hath joined together"? *From the beginning* of the work of evangelisation the apostles changed the Sabbath into "the Lord's Day" and transferred it from "the seventh day" to the place of honour, "the first".[4] We follow them unquestionably in that. Why then do we set at naught their organisation of "the Ecclesia of God" and rend the body of Christ limb from limb, to the untold injury both of our reputation and *character* as Christians? He says: "If ye love me, ye will keep my

[1] 2 Thess. ii. 7. [2] 1 Cor. iii. 9, 10.
[3] "The body of Christ" (1 Cor. xii. 27).
[4] Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 2; Rev. i. 10.

commandments ".[1] If, then, our love were the loyalty and devotion to His will shown by the apostles, who gloried that He was their *despotēs* (absolute master),[2] and that they were His *douloi* (absolute slaves),[3] it would overleap all obstacles and locally federate our denominations forthwith.

In a subsequent chapter an endeavour is made to define the true relationship of the denominations to each other and to "the Ecclesia of God" in each city.[4]

It may now be noted that the word city (*polis*) is repeatedly used in the New Testament in a *generic* sense, to indicate simply a detached community, local government area, or island of population, whether actually a city or a village. For example, in Matt. x. 11 the words "city (*polis*) or village (*kome*)" evidently signify the same thing as "city (*polis*)" in vv. 14 and 23. Similarly the "cities and villages" of Luke viii. 1 are summarised by "every city" in v. 4. In the following passages the word "city (*polis*)" has manifestly the generic meaning: Matt. xxiii. 34; Acts xv. 21; xx. 23. Compare also Luke ix. 5, "city (*polis*)," with v. 6, "villages (*kōmai*)"; and Luke ii. 4, "city," with John vii. 42, "village".

It will further be found that the New Testament word "village (*kome*)" is restricted solely to places in the Holy Land, and is never used of a place, Jewish or Gentile, which had an Ecclesia. Now we know that Christ (and His disciples also during His earthly ministry) proclaimed the glad tidings of the Kingdom both to cities and villages.[5] We remember also that the persecution which arose on the martyrdom of Stephen, and which "scattered abroad" the disciples "throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria," indirectly led to the preaching of the Gospel by the apostles in many

[1] John xiv. 15.
[2] 2 Tim. ii. 21; 2 Pet. ii. 1.
[3] Acts iv. 29; Rom. i. 1.
[4] See p. 169 *seq.*
[5] Luke viii. 1; ix. 6; Matt. x. 11.

Samaritan "villages".[1] We may therefore safely conclude that in Gentile lands also, the Gospel would be preached by them in cities and villages, and that an Ecclesia would be planted in every place, where there were sufficient converts to form an organised community.

Paul refers to "the Ecclesias of Judea,"[2] "the Ecclesias of Galatia,"[3] and "the Ecclesias of Macedonia,"[4] and we cannot doubt that some of these would be in rural districts. What area of population a country Ecclesia usually embraced we cannot say, as there seems to be no specific reference to such a community in the New Testament. By their very smallness, villages create a problem in organisation; but the difficulty is met and overcome in civil government by grouping parishes together to form a "rural district council". The Christians of several adjacent villages may thus have associated to form an Ecclesia, as in fact Methodists do to-day to form a circuit.[5]

We may now consider why the word "city (*polis*)" is invariably employed in the New Testament to designate a place, large or small, where there was an Ecclesia, whether in Palestine or other countries. Our investigation has so far clearly indicated that an Ecclesia was planted wherever, in town or village, there were sufficient converts to enable one to be organised. Is it not more than probable that

[1] Acts viii. 25.
[2] Gal. i. 22.
[3] 1 Cor. xvi. 1.
[4] 2 Cor. viii. 1.

[5] An interesting sidelight is thrown upon apostolic plans of evangelisation by the words: "And they" (*i.e.*, Paul and Silas) "went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden of the Holy Ghost to speak the word in Asia, and when they were come over against Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia; and the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not" (Acts xvi. 7). Here, Christian strategy gives a hint to modern missionaries to strike big blows, by aiming first at influential centres. Philip's work clearly enforces the same lesson. The news of the wonderful bodily and spiritual healing effected by him in Samaria, causing "much joy in that city," doubtless travelled far; and prepared the way for Peter and John's subsequent preaching of "the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans" (Acts viii. 5-25).

places having Ecclesias are always called *cities* in order to emphasise the autonomy which distinguished the Christian institution, and which was also so prominently identified with the *city-state* in the age when the Epistles were written?

History tells us how dear to, nay ineradicable from, the Greek mind was the independence of the city-states, and how, after their liberties were finally overthrown by Rome, and their governments merged in the administrations of provinces, a number of the cities sued and obtained from the conquering power municipal home rule, on their full, sincere, and doubtless tribute-paying, recognition of her imperial sovereignty. Such "free cities" (*urbes liberæ*) were thereby, like the "free imperial cities" of the middle ages, placed in an all but autonomous and therefore highly enviable position. Tarsus (which Paul characterises as "no mean city"[1]), Antioch,[2] and Ephesus,[3] may be mentioned as examples. Now, since it is the peculiar genius of Christianity to assimilate and "hold fast that which is good" from whatever source it comes,[4] it seems extremely probable that the free yet tributary municipal ecclesia was chosen as a type of "the Ecclesia of God," self-governing, yet under Christ as sovereign Head and Lord.[5]

The plan of the apostolic Ecclesia clearly incorporates two great ideas: (*a*) the primary Jewish one of the assembly (Sept. *ekklesia*, Heb. *qahal*) of the chosen people under the

[1] Acts xxi. 39. See Conybeare and Howson, *The Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, vol. i., pp. 55, 56.

[2] Conybeare and Howson, vol. i., pp. 56 and 392.

[3] Conybeare and Howson, vol. ii., p. 92.

[4] Mark iv. 23-25; Phil. iv. 8; 1 Thess. v. 21.

[5] The Gospel was ere long to spread throughout all the Greek-speaking nations, and the thoughtful among their citizens could not fail to perceive the parallel between the political and the spiritual community, and also the great superiority of the organisation of the latter.

old covenant;[1] (*b*) the Gentile one (as we have seen) of the Greek civic ecclesia or constitutional assembly of the citizens of the city-state. A further conception resides perhaps in the root meaning of the word *ecclesia*, to "call out". Just as all male Jews[2] and all the male Greeks of the city-state were "called out" from the general population to form an ecclesia; so are all the believers in a city called out by Christ to form "the Ecclesia of God".[3]

The members of each city community of Christians live, so to speak, in a ring fence. Being thus all in touch, they are in the best possible position, not only to promote each other's highest good, but also—by joint counsel and action in physically, socially and spiritually elevating their fellow-men—to exercise their love to neighbour as to self. Thereby, as "a city set on a hill" that "cannot be hid," their light may so "shine before men" that they, seeing their "good works," will glorify our Father "who is in heaven".[4]

And just as every city council is responsible for the maintenance of law and order, and the promotion of the most vigorous physical and intellectual life of those within its limits, so every Ecclesia and its members as "the body of Christ,"[5] "the salt of the earth," in its city sphere, should hold themselves responsible for teaching and practising His transfiguring truths and precepts; for promoting every material, moral, social and political reform for the well-being of their fellow-men; and for winning them in Him to "whatsoever things are true, honourable, just, pure, lovely and of good report".[6]

[1] The idea throughout is that of an assembly or gathering before God. "The Ecclesia in the wilderness" referred to by Stephen was to all intents and purposes a moving *city* (Acts vii. 38). See the following references to the *qahal* or *ekklesia:* Exod. xii. 6; Lev. iv. 13, 14; Num. xv. 15; Deut. ix. 10; xxxi. 30; Josh. viii. 35; 1 Chron. xxviii. 8; 2 Chron. xxx. 23; Jer. xxvi. 17; Acts vii. 38.

[2] Exod. xxiii. 17.

[3] Whilst the Jewish and the Gentile ecclesia consisted solely of male members, the Christian Ecclesia comprises all His followers (Acts i. 14, 26; Rom. xvi. 1-6; Gal. iii. 28).

[4] Matt. v. 16. [5] 1 Cor. xii. 27. [6] Phil. iv. 8.

The Ecclesias should indeed vie with each other in all these things. And thus, in every centre of population having Christians enough for an organised community, Christ's prayer might visibly and speedily be fulfilled that His people "may be perfected into one; that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me".[1]

"Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God."[2]

"Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King."[3]

"For the Lord hath chosen Zion. He hath desired it for his habitation. This is my resting place for ever."[4]

"Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me."[5]

"Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King."[6]

"And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."[7]

"Cry aloud and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion; for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee."[8]

"They shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces."[9]

"Yea, of Zion it shall be said, This one and that one was born in her; and the Host High himself shall establish her."[10]

Can we wonder if, in presence of such soul-stirring words, many Jewish exiles to-day enthusiastically hail the Zionist movement? But, alas, with their present belief they hope only for an earthly Zion, bereft of its tribes and of the glories of God's dwelling-place, the temple! The eyes of the

[1] John xvii. 23. [2] Ps. lxxxvii. 3. [3] Ps. xlviii. 2.
[4] Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14. [5] Isa. xlix. 16. [6] Ps. cxlix. 2.
[7] Isa. li. 11. [8] Isa. xii. 6. [9] Ps. cxxii. 6, 7.
[10] Ps. lxxxvii. 5.

prophets saw a more entrancing spectacle. The many rapturous visions in both Old and New Testaments of the city of God, culminating in the metaphor-exhausting description [1] of the "new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven [1]
from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband," plainly point to the ideal city whose glorified inhabitants enjoy eternal communion with God and Christ [2] and each other. [2]

And "the Ecclesia of God," the Christian community in each city, was doubtless intended to be a microcosm or miniature of this; in order, amongst other things, to bring home to its members the fact that in spirit they already "are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," the Ecclesia Universal, invisible though it be to the natural eye.[3] [3]

The immeasurably greater practical advantages of the apostolic Ecclesia, over those of the Old Testament assembly in Jerusalem, are apparent on a moment's reflection. In the latter case, the male portion of the Jewish people from all parts of the land appeared thrice a year "before God in Zion"; [4] [4]
whereas, under the new covenant, every city or town having an Ecclesia has therein its Zion, where at all times the whole assembly of believers may jointly meet with God in Christ.[5] [5]

[1] Rev. xxi. and xxii.

[2] Rev. xxi. 3, 4; xxii. 4, 5.

[3] See p. 165.

[4] Exod. xxxiv. 23; Ps. lxxxiv. 7.

[5] In modern times we know how difficult it is to control those national philanthropic and other organisations whose supporters are scattered all over the kingdom, but whose annual business meetings are composed of a mere handful of London members or subscribers. Associations also which depend largely on shifting parliaments (*i.e.*, on annual congresses meeting in changing towns, and which in many of these have only a ghost of a local auxiliary) are equally unsatisfactory. This has throughout been the weak point of the otherwise excellent Evangelical Alliance scheme. Those of us who have had to fight out important practical questions with headquarters' permanent officials of large national organisations (including missionary society secretaries, in some cases ministers without business training) know how much harder it is to move great national *far-off* bodies than locally elected and administered institutions.

Is there not therefore world-wide need for a *Christian* Zionist movement—for the re-establishment of "the temple
[1] of God"[1] in every centre of population where there are Christians enough to form a New Testament Ecclesia?

From the view point of history, there seem to be still further advantages in the city Ecclesia of the apostles. The Church of a State necessarily follows the fortunes of the State. In the case of city Ecclesias, however, if the State be overthrown, *some* cities, and consequently some Ecclesias, would by the law of probability survive. Had the apostolic Ecclesias in each generation firmly maintained their original city-province and their spiritual non-Erastian character, they might not only have lived and flourished but have saved the
[2] lives of their cities.[2] Further, preserved cities may mean preserved nations, for history gives us numerous examples of cities which have been the bulwark of the life and liberty of their States. It seems indeed extremely probable that the city was chosen as the unit and area of the Ecclesia in order, among other things, to prevent the growth of huge, dominating, national or world-wide hierarchies. If the great city principle of the apostles had not in subsequent generations been weakly and culpably thrown away by the Ecclesia constituencies, Christianity would unquestionably have been spared the terrible infliction of Papal Rome. Another probable reason for the institution of the city Ecclesia was that such *local* communities of Christian workers might, within a reasonable time, expect to *see* the results of their concentrated effort in regenerating the spiritual, social and political life of the people; whereas, had the fruits of Christian work been *diffused over a nation*, they would for a long period have been inappreciable and thus to that extent discouraging.

[1] 1 Cor. iii. 17.

[2] Matt. xi. 23. It is noteworthy that the only Ecclesia which Christ *unqualifiedly* commended in His seven messages, that of Smyrna, is the only one whose city has remained to our own day. See Rev. ii. and iii.

The salient idea, then, of the New Testament organisation is that of a city, town or village community of Christians, whose members can readily commune with each other and who, like the limbs of a body, are in joint relationship with their glorious Head; this local body also mystically representing the entire body of believers in heaven and on earth.[1] [1]

In presence of the many distinct references to the members of an Ecclesia as together constituting Christ's body, and clearly defining it as consisting of the Christians of a city;[2] [2] and, above all, of the fact that Christ Himself in His messages to the seven Ecclesias expressly recognises and thus gives divine sanction to the city community principle planned by His agents;[3] this point need not be further pursued here except to pause for a moment to reflect that the Greek, Roman Catholic, Armenian and Coptic Churches, the various Established and non-Established Episcopalian and non-Episcopalian national Churches, and every district Christian Church—however important and valuable as purely tribal communities any of these may be—all lack the essential city or population-island constituency of the Ecclesia Local or Christian organisation founded by the apostles. [3]

Whilst there is abundant evidence in the New Testament of generous voluntary co-operation between the separate city Ecclesias,[4] it contains no instance of these Ecclesias in any [4]

[1] How can any one of the denominational limbs have the hardihood to call itself "the body"? "But now hath God set the members each one of them in the body, even as it pleased Him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now they are many members, but one body" (1 Cor. xii. 18-20).

[2] 1 Cor. iii. 16; xii. 27; Col. iii. 15; Eph. ii. 21.

[3] Rev. ii. 1, 8, 12, 18; iii. 1, 7, 14.

[4] Acts xi. 27-30; Rom. xv. 26-28; 1 Cor. xvi. 1-4; 2 Cor. viii. It is extremely interesting to see not only how Paul expected every Ecclesia to live up to the acknowledged standard of Christian practice (1 Cor. xi. 16; xiv. 33), but how also he pointed the more inert communities to the noble and Christlike conduct of others (2 Cor. ix. 1-15; 1 Thess. i. 7). There is no indication in the record of any *disharmony* between the various Ecclesias; this came in like a flood with the hierarchs who finally destroyed them as separate organisms (see p. 136 *seq.*).

province or State merging themselves in one provincial or national Ecclesia. All its references to the Christian community in the case of provinces or States are in the plural, [1] [2] *e.g.*, "the Ecclesias of Judæa,"[1] "the Ecclesias of Galatia,"[2] [3] "the Ecclesias of Macedonia,"[3] and it contains no such conception as that of a national or provincial "Ecclesia". Indeed, even in cases like that of Cenchreæ, the eastern port of Corinth and barely nine miles distant from it, there is no merging of its Christian community with that of the great [4] city: it has its own autonomous Ecclesia.[4] Christ's seven messages in the Revelation know nothing of provincial Ecclesias; each of them is addressed to a city community.

The action of the apostles, elders and members of the Jerusalem Ecclesia in sending a joint letter of instruction to the members of the recently formed Antioch Ecclesia in reply to the deputation from the latter asking their decision on a burning question stirred up by unauthorised emissaries from [5] the mother Ecclesia[5] did not, as we shall see later, in any way imply that the Jerusalem Ecclesia was in a position of permanent authority over that of Antioch or was in any sense, to use the ecclesiastical phrase, a "metropolitan [6] church".[6]

There is one and only one New Testament mention of the word Ecclesia which *at first sight* seems to point to a national Christian organisation: "So the Ecclesia throughout all [7] Judæa and Galilee and Samaria had peace," etc.[7] But a little reflection will show that here the Ecclesia Universal only could have been in the writer's mind. The Pauline persecution which began with Stephen's martyrdom had been overruled by God to scatter the members of the Jerusalem Ecclesia "throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria" (Philip's proclamation of "the Christ" in the city of Samaria being

[1] Gal. i. 22. [2] 1 Cor. xvi. 1. [3] 2 Cor. iii. 1. [4] Rom. xvi. 1.
[5] Acts xv. [6] See p. 89 *seq.* [7] Acts ix. 31.

its first recorded result);[1] the more northerly province, [1]
Galilee, was doubtless soon after entered by them.[2] And [2]
now the fruitful result of their evangelisation work is reviewed
by Luke. Up to this point in his narrative, he has been de-
scribing the remarkable progress of the Gospel amongst the
Jews; and, before passing to his account of its introduction
to the *Gentile* world by Peter and the exiles from Jerusalem,[3] [3]
he surveys the delightful situation which followed Paul's
conversion with the remark that "the Ecclesia" throughout
the three Jewish provinces "had peace, being edified, and,
walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the
Holy Ghost, was multiplied". The words "the Ecclesia
throughout all Judæa and Galilee and Samaria" therefore
plainly indicate that the institution which was destined to
overspread the earth, *i.e.*, the Ecclesia Universal and Invisible,
had thus far covered these three Jewish provinces; and what
follows shows us how its *evangelisation of the Gentile races*
began. Neither before nor after this is there the slightest
suggestion in the record of any visible community other than
the Ecclesia Local, nor the smallest hint of any great over-
shadowing organisation such as a national Jewish Ecclesia
comprising Judæa, Galilee and Samaria would unquestionably
have been.[4] [4]

We cannot leave Luke's words about the great prosperity
and peace enjoyed by the Ecclesia Universal throughout these

[1] Acts viii. 1-4.

[2] Philip was close to Galilee when he reached Cæsarea (Acts viii. 40), and very probably some evangelisation work had already been done in their province by the Galilæans who were present at the great pentecostal gathering (Acts ii. 5, 7).

[3] Acts ix. 32; xi. 20.

[4] As claimants to be New Testament *Ecclesias*, do not the advocates of *national* Churches, Established and non-Established, in departing from the apostolic principle of one Ecclesia in one city, err by inflation, as obviously as do *Congregationalist* bodies by fission? *As tribes or denominations*, these and all other Christian sects have their place, and that a most important one, in the New Testament scheme; but meantime let us clear our minds of the wholly fallacious idea that such bodies are apostolic *Ecclesias*.

Jewish provinces after the ruthless storm of the Pauline persecution, without perceiving in them a wondrous fulfilment of Christ's assurance, "Upon this rock I will build my
1 Ecclesia, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it".[1]

The definition of a Christian Ecclesia, which some perplexed but mentally ease-loving minds fall back upon as a satisfactory closure of the whole controversy on the subject, "a congregation of faithful men," has no support in the New Testament. It would make any unorganised gathering of Christians—even the "two or three" who "are gathered
2 3 together in" Christ's "name"[2]—an Ecclesia,[3] thereby completely subverting the apostolic principle of one Ecclesia in one city. The formula would indeed have excommunicated the apostolic community in Ephesus, that in Pergamum, that in Thyatira, that in Sardis and that in Laodicea; for Christ found all the five *un*faithful. Yet He nevertheless addressed each of them as an Ecclesia.

No valid objection can, however, be raised to the use of the word "Church" to designate a denomination, or a local com-
4 munity, or building of such denomination.[4] The Greek word from which it is derived—*kuriakos*, belonging to a lord—is never applied in the New Testament to the apostolic organisation, albeit the latter is mentioned by name over 100 times. Unquestionably, therefore, Anglicans, Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists, Presbyterians, etc., as purely *tribal*

[1] Matt. xvi. 18. [2] Matt. xviii. 20.

[3] The writer has repeatedly heard this view maintained. But it is never shown where the two or three are to get their "bishops and deacons" (Phil. i. 1). See pp. 82, 126.

[4] It is noteworthy that, amid the general abandonment of apostolic governmental ideals, England has not followed the lead of those of the Latin nations who have wrongly transferred the name of the Ecclesia to churches and church buildings, *e.g.*, French *église*, Spanish *iglesia*. In the word *ecclesiastical*, however, Englishmen have handed down the name with quite as serious a perversion of original meaning.

bodies, have as much right to call themselves a *Church* as had each of the separate Jewish communities, which jointly hurried Stephen to his martyrdom, to call itself the *synagogue* of the Libertines, or of the Cyrenians, or of the Alexandrians, or of them of Cilicia and Asia.

To any higher title or status than this, however, no single denomination *per se* has the smallest Scriptural claim, for, as sectional bodies, they all, as we have already seen, lack the essential notes or characteristics of the "Ecclesia," the name invariably given in the New Testament to the apostolic community.

In addition to the many New Testament references to the apostolic organisation in each city as a single community or "body," there are also, in the case of some of the larger cities, very clear indications of smaller sectional gatherings in different parts of the city area.[1] These probably corresponded [1]
in general character with our modern churches and with the Jewish synagogues in apostolic times.

In Rom. xvi.—after saluting Prisca and Aquila, the hostess and host of the Ecclesia at Rome, then the Ecclesia as a whole, then various individual members of it—Paul greets two, if not four (see vv. 14 and 15, also vv. 10 and 11), well-marked groups in the community who probably were in the habit of assembling locally, both for evangelistic work and for the edification of their adherents. Paul's remark in his address to the elders of Ephesus: "And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I went about preaching the Kingdom," etc.,[2] also seems to indicate local groups in different [2]
parts of the city.[3] [3]

As regards the meeting-places of such sectional gatherings, we must remember that the political situation nearly always necessitated these being "at home".[4] The meetings, for [4]

[1] Acts ii. 46; v. 42; viii. 3; xx. 20. [2] Acts xx. 25.
[3] Pastors of *folds* of the flock? See Acts xx. 28, also John x. 16.
[4] Acts ii. 46; v. 42; xii. 12.

various purposes, of "the whole Ecclesia" as a single unit and organisation would, as previously suggested, probably be held in the largest room of some richer convert's house.[1]

It is a significant fact that the New Testament refers only once by name to the Christian synagogue,[2] and the Old Testament only once by name to the synagogue or local place of worship and spiritual edification of the Jews [3]—under both the Law and the Gospel there is a recognition of their existence and nothing more. Such sectional or district organisations, both under the old dispensation [4] and the new, are purely human institutions which, like Sunday schools, Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations, P.S.A. Meetings, Christian Endeavour Societies, and other handmaids of the divinely planned Ecclesia, were left to man to develop on various lines as the actual need for them arose; their *validity* being thus in direct proportion to their *value* for conversion and edification purposes.

Kept to their proper sphere, both the ancient and the modern institution have proved of the greatest practical service; but, unhappily, when not so restricted, both the Jewish and the Christian organisation have tended powerfully to dominate and displace "the Ecclesia of God".

We perceive the great value of the Jewish synagogue in the fact that it enabled all Israelite communities away from Jerusalem, and particularly in heathen lands, to maintain the regular public worship of God. Indeed, Christ's own high sanction of it plainly appears in His regularly attending it on the Sabbath, and His constant use of it to preach "the Gospel of the Kingdom".[5] We all know, too, how largely Paul utilised it in his missionary campaigns.

[1] 1 Cor. xiv. 23; Rom. xvi. 23; Acts xix. 9.

[2] James ii. 2.

[3] Ps. lxxiv. 8.

[4] Jerusalem is said to have had nearly 500 "synagogues". From the New Testament we learn that other large cities had several or many (Acts ix. 2, 20; xiii. 5; xxiv. 12; xxvi. 10, 11).

[5] Mark i. 39; Luke iv. 16; John xviii. 20.

The inestimable importance of the Christian synagogue, in our own day and throughout the many dark centuries in which it has been the one society "holding forth the word of life," is of course a fact familiar to us all.

Nevertheless, the essentially human origin and character of both institutions, as distinguished from "the Ecclesia of God," are clearly emphasised in the record. In the following seven passages the Jewish organisation and meeting-place are pointedly referred to as "their" synagogue: Matt. iv. 23; ix. 35; x. 17; xii. 9; xiii. 54; Mark i. 23; Luke iv. 15.

In Matt. xxiii. 34 the synagogues are emphatically characterised by Christ as "your" synagogues; and (four verses below) He uses the same significant word of the temple itself *when forsaken of God!*—"Behold your house is left unto you desolate".[1] In the already cited and only mention of the [1]
Christian synagogue by name, James, in his epistle, refers to it as "your" synagogue—a form of expression not once found among the 107 New Testament mentions of the Ecclesia. In 12, however, of these 107 instances, the latter is called the Ecclesia "of God";[2] twice it is designated the Ecclesia "in [2]
God"; once it is stated to be the Ecclesia "of Christ"; once the Ecclesia "in Christ," and many times it is spoken of as "the body" of which He is Himself the "Head". On the other hand, not one of the 67 mentions of the synagogue refers to a synagogue *of God;* two of them, however, speak in the most reproachful terms of a "synagogue of Satan".

Whatever it was in theory, the government of the Jewish synagogue would appear to have been, in fact, autocratic. The term "elder" (*presbuteros*), so often used in the New Testament to designate the representative rulers of the Jews and those also of the Christian Ecclesia, does not appear in the context of any of the 67 mentions of the synagogue. The

[1] See also Jer. xii. 7, 8.

[2] In three of these the phrase is "the Ecclesia of God," and in one of them "the Ecclesia of the living God".

governors of the synagogue — sometimes one,[1] sometimes more[2]—are always styled *archontes*, like princes, rulers, chiefs and magistrates.[3] This is not surprising when we read of the magisterial powers they were permitted to exercise.

The blind, bitter, fanatical spirit, so often developed in the synagogues of the Jews, is only too plainly evidenced by the scourgings,[4] by the persecution of Christians "unto the death,"[5] by the attempt at Damascus to kill Paul,[6] by that at Nazareth to murder the Messiah Himself.[7] Truth compels us to add that, metaphorically speaking, a good deal of scourging is going on in numbers of our denominational synagogues to-day, as many a saddened minister and church member might testify. In the nature of things, this must inevitably continue till these sectional communities—now isolated from each other and thereby necessarily developing narrow, village-minded tendencies—are influenced by the higher, broader, nobler, Christian spirit and sentiment which would be generated by the federation of the separated tribes of the Christian Israel[8] in each city as an "Ecclesia of God".[9]

[1] Luke xiii. 14; Acts xviii. 8-17. [2] Mark v. 22; Acts xiii. 15.

[3] It is true that *archon* is sometimes used generically for all kinds of rulers (Acts iii. 17; xiii. 27), but in detailed narrations it seems to be specifically distinguished from *presbuteros* (elder) (Acts iv. 5, 8). The term is never applied to Ecclesia rulers or officers.

[4] Matt. x. 17; xxiii. 24; Acts xxii. 19; xxvi. 11. [5] Acts vi. 9-vii. 60.

[6] Acts ix. 20-25. [7] Luke iv. 28, 29. [8] See p. 148 *seq.*

[9] The relation of the invisible Christian Ecclesia of a city to its associated churches would then virtually be that of the visible temple to the Jerusalem synagogues. In the New Testament the Ecclesia is more than once referred to as a temple (1 Cor. iii. 16; Eph. ii. 21), and the church or chapel gathering in its only New Testament mention is styled a "synagogue" (James ii. 2), like the sectional meeting-place of the Jews (Acts vi. 9). And, as the temple symbolised Christ and so also does the Christian temple (Eph. ii. 21) or Ecclesia (1 Cor. xii. 12, 27), the temple and the synagogues in Jerusalem may be regarded as the type of each Ecclesia and its affiliated churches.

CHAPTER IV

THE ECCLESIA A BROTHERHOOD

41, Its organisation founded on civic lines. 42, Its governmental authority resides in its members; in Jerusalem they elected an apostle! Could such an election be valid? 44, The arbitrament of the lot.

An open-minded study of the sacred record, uninfluenced by the authority of human prescription and tradition, will clearly reveal the fact that the apostolic organisation is planned on civic, not ecclesiastical, lines.[1] 1

Further, an examination of a few of the 120 New Testament mentions of the word "brethren," will quickly lead to the conviction that it is a spiritual brotherhood[2] under Christ 2
its divine Head and Lord; on its man-ward side, a democracy; on its God-ward side, a theocracy. The liberty, equality and fraternity, which the French Revolutionists imagined they discovered over a century ago, will be seen to have been anticipated 1,700 years before in Christ's memorable words: "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your teacher, and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father on the earth: for one is your Father, who is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your master, *even* the Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant, and whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted."[3] 3

The utter absence from this brotherhood of the hierarchal

[1] "Christian republics," *i.e.*, Ecclesias, "were soon founded in the cities of Corinth, of Sparta, and of Athens" (Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, vol. i., p. 334).

[2] "Love the brotherhood" (1 Peter ii. 17). [3] Matt. xxiii. 8-12.

pomp and authority which are of the essence of Roman
[1] Catholicism,[1] and which have done so much injury to the Anglican denomination, is manifest in the fact that those occupying the highest Christian office (that of the apostles)
[2] are simply called "the twelve,"[2] and those elected to administer the lowest (the bodily relief of the Ecclesia poor)
[3] are styled "the seven".[3] On this subject Mosheim remarks: "Among all members of the Church, of whatever class or condition, there was a most perfect equality which they manifested by their love-feasts, by their use of the
[4] appellatives *brethren* and *sisters* and in other ways".[4] "The highest authority was in the *people* or whole body of Christians; for even the apostles themselves inculcated by their example that nothing of any moment was to be done or determined
[5] on, but with the knowledge and consent of the brotherhood."[5]

At the inception of the first Christian Ecclesia it seems to have been taken for granted that every *regenerated* man and woman was *ipso facto* qualified for the exercise of its
[6] franchise.[6]

That, in the apostolic community, the ultimate governmental authority resides in the members, is plainly indicated by the fact that the first official act of the apostles, after Christ's ascension, was to lead the disciples in Jerusalem (both men and women) to elect a person to the very highest office—that of the apostleship vacated by Judas.

It is significant that the apostles did not themselves co-opt any person to the post; the more so when we reflect that the community was as yet wholly unorganised. The election by the 120 was in fact a foreshadowing of the referendum

[1] The angelic announcement of Christ's advent to the world was made, not to chief priests or other dignitaries, but to shepherds "keeping watch by night over their flock" (Luke ii. 8).

[2] Matt. xxvi. 14; Acts vi. 2. [3] Acts xxi. 8.

[4] *Ecclesiastical History*, p. 33. Ed. A.D. 1878.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 33. See Acts i. 15 *seq.*; vi. 3; xv. 4, 22. [6] Acts i. 14-26.

subsequently convened in an hour of crisis and which then played a most important part.[1] It is thus evident that here, as throughout the history of the early Ecclesia, the apostles took a markedly non-autocratic course.

The fact that the election was held after "all with one accord" had "continued stedfastly in prayer" precludes the irreverent supposition of some that Christ's witnesses and agents[2] acted unwarrantedly in thus proceeding to fill up their incomplete ranks. In all probability it was their divine Leader's design, communicated to them during the "forty days,"[3] that at the commencement of their great work at Pentecost—the laying of the foundation-stones of *the New Jerusalem*—they should stand before the Jewish people and all future ages a complete body, symbolising the spiritual tribes in His new kingdom.[4] Before His crucifixion He had told them: "In the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel".

In the Revelation, too, they are figuratively represented as the "twelve foundations" of the wall of "the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God".[5] It was necessary, therefore, to appoint a twelfth apostle; otherwise, the spiritual building would have begun to rise without one of its foundations. Now as Christ Himself did not make the appointment during His forty days' intercourse with the eleven; as they must therefore have asked His mind and guidance on such an important matter; and as their whole governmental policy afterwards as apostles was profoundly democratic; it seems more than probable that He then taught them, both by precept and example, that all rule and authority in Him as King and Head was henceforth to reside in the membership of His body, *i.e.*, in the entire constitu-

[1] Acts xv. 22. [2] John xx. 22. [3] Acts i. 3.

[4] Their ranks, it should be noted, continued unbroken throughout the fierce fire of the Pauline persecution (Acts viii. 1). [5] Rev. xxi. 2, 14.

ency of the Ecclesia: He Himself being present with them "alway, even unto the end of the world".

Peter's spontaneous action in the upper room, as the mouthpiece of the twelve, was doubtless, therefore, felt by all present to be in line with their Master's will, and regarded by them as one of His answers to their continuance
1 "stedfastly in prayer".[1]

There is little weight in the suggestion sometimes made that *Paul* was the true successor to Judas chosen by the Holy Spirit. However transcendent his apostleship and gifts, he had not the particular qualification for *membership of the twelve* specified by Christ Himself, and to which Peter pointed
2 the 120 disciples before they proceeded to elect an apostle.[2]

As to the circumstance that we never hear anything more of the chosen person, Matthias, the same is true of at least seven of the eleven apostles, who, after Acts i. 13, are not again mentioned *by name* in the New Testament. The significant facts that, as with all the apostles directly chosen
3 by the Lord, no hands were laid upon him,[3] and that God Himself afterwards directly honoured the work of "the
4 twelve" by "many signs and wonders,"[4] will we think satisfy any open mind of the validity of Matthias' election.

We may now refer to another governmental principle of the Christian brotherhood which apostolic precedent establishes for us in connection with this election, *viz.*, that where more than one candidate offers himself for an office or post and the voting gives each an absolutely equal claim—human skill being thus powerless to decide between them—the decision is to be referred to the divine Head of the Ecclesia by

[1] It is very significant in this connection that when Paul was chosen for his first missionary campaign, the Holy Ghost honoured the committee of the Antioch Ecclesia, with whom the appointment lay, by making the call *through them* and not to Paul and his coadjutor *direct* (Acts xiii. 1-3).

[2] John xv. 27; Acts i. 21, 22; Luke i. 2.

[3] See p. 115.] [4] Acts v. 12; vi. 2.

the lot, in prayer.[1] It is difficult to understand the course [1]
taken by the apostles in this matter on any other supposition than that the votes cast for Joseph and Matthias were exactly equal. If no vote was taken before "the lot fell upon Matthias," it would be ever afterwards open to the supporters of Joseph to say that *he* might have been elected, and that there was no Scriptural warrant for referring a matter to God which those present could and ought to have decided themselves by the reasoning faculties which He had given them, *i.e.*, by adopting just, wise and approved constitutional methods. To suppose that the expression "they put forward" (*estēsan*) two candidates means that they simply nominated them without subjecting them to the vote, and then, *after thus limiting His choice,* asked God to decide which of the two was to be appointed, would be so presumptuous a procedure that we cannot conceive it of the apostles.

Assuming, then, that the votes for the two nominees were equal, there would seem to have been the following alternative courses:—

Supposition (*a*).—The matter is referred again to the constituency through a fresh or amended vote. That would virtually mean asking each voter, after he had *prayerfully*[2] [2]
made his choice, to doubt God's guidance in the matter! Moreover, if every person present *did* alter his vote, the result would simply be another, though opposite, tie.

Supposition (*b*).—The chairman is empowered (as chairmen often are to-day in the case of tie votes) to decide the matter by giving a second or casting vote—obviously in favour of his own view. That procedure is so manifestly unjust that it cannot for a moment be imagined of the apostles.[3] [3]

Supposition (*c*).—That as the tie resulted from an equal vote

[1] Acts i. 24-26; Num. xxxiii. 50-54; 1 Chron. xxiv. 5-31; Prov. xvi. 33; xviii. 18. [2] Acts i. 14.

Had the community, instead of being a Christian brotherhood, been dominated by a hierarchy, the latter itself would have elected Judas' successor.

(sixty for each candidate), it was felt that the only just solution of the difficulty was a decision by the Head of the Ecclesia Himself, through the lot, in prayer. "The lot is cast into the lap and the whole disposing thereof is of the
[1] Lord."[1]

The whole constituency evidently accepted Matthias as Christ's choice, and then (like the "prophets and teachers" whom God directed to separate Paul and Barnabas for their great missionary work) they did their human part by officially making the appointment. He was numbered with (*sungkatepsēphisthē meta, i.e.*, voted in amongst) the eleven
[2] apostles.[2]

And so if we, to-day, acting *in Christ's spirit and way*—on His just and wise governmental principles—are blocked by a tie in votes, we have the full warrant of Acts i. 26 to refer the choice of candidates to the Head of the Ecclesia by the lot in prayer.

[1] Prov. xvi. 33. [2] Acts i. 26.

CHAPTER V

DIRECTLY ELECTIVE, PROPORTIONALLY REPRESENTATIVE, DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEES

48, The members of the Jerusalem Ecclesia elect a committee. The election embodied a new representative principle. 51, God holds communities responsible for their representatives' acts. 53, An analysis of the ecclesiastical view as to "the seven". They are nowhere called "deacons" in the New Testament. The traditional view, a reflection on the apostles. 54, "The seven" a departmental body responsible only to their constituents. 55, The apostles designate their own work and that of "the seven" by the same term. The qualifications of "the seven" virtually those of the elder specified by Paul. 56, They appear to be afterwards referred to as "elders". The apostles *solemnly* appointed them to their departmental sphere. 57, Primal foundation-stones. 58, The world's first foreign missionary committee. 60, What we do by others we do by ourselves. 61, Had all the Ecclesias *ad hoc* committees? 62, Are departmental committees presbyteries? 65, The elders who are not *departmental* elders. The Ecclesia organisation involves Christian union. 66, Constituencies which elect their committees can fix their term. A periodical and simultaneous election of committees naturally follows. 67, The election of "seven" indicates that the committee was to be "complete". Personal and representative completeness. 69, Majority voting leaves many unrepresented. Is suitable only for electing one person or deciding one point. Initial reforms usually have small following. They should have their quota of representation. 70, The apostles' instruction possibly a mystery to themselves. The principle embodied was probably sown for future centuries. 71, Proportional representation subsequently lost for ages. Partially restored in the elections of British school boards. The ideal "completeness" of the spiritual ruler. 72, The educative influence of just representation. Should Christian communities do philanthropic work? 75, Committee government has divine sanction: is a great bulwark of liberty: rules for all by all: is within reach of every association: should be based on scientific lines. These revealed by Christ's apostles. Democratic institutions generally should embody them. 77, The first departmental committee election, an apostolic precedent.

78, Ecclesia committees may detach any of their members for special service. 79, The co-ordination of departments. 80, Ecclesia committees, like those of modern organisations, need officers. The New Testament *diakonos* a servant under rulers. 81, The qualifications of New Testament rulers and servants compared. 82, The Ecclesia servant a "civic" not an ecclesiastic.

WHEN there arose a murmuring of the Grecian Jews against the Hebrews, because "their widows were neglected in the
[1] daily ministration," we find the twelve apostles [1]—instead of personally selecting a man or a number of men to deal with the difficulty, or directing that a body of rulers be elected to take in hand the general administration of the rapidly growing community—guiding the "multitude" (*plethos*) or entire
[2] membership of the Ecclesia [2] to elect a committee to administer its relief fund. Since, therefore, the constituency was
[3] directed to elect to the very highest office, that of an apostle,[3] as well as to the least spiritual one, that of a body to minister to the physical needs of the Ecclesia's poor, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that *all its intermediate administrators were likewise intended to be chosen by it.* What a lesson is here for those hierarchs who, practically ignoring the rank and
[4] file, lord it over God's heritage to-day![4]

The direct election of a departmental committee, by the members of the Ecclesia, brings us face to face with a remarkable governmental principle; one which seems to have been undiscovered even by democratic Greece and was probably quite new to history. In ancient Rome, according to Professor Ramsay, "the modern idea of a committee was
[5] unknown".[5] He adds: "Bodies of three, five, ten, or more officers were frequent in Rome; but they were not committees. Each individual possessed the full powers of the whole body. The act of one was authoritative as the act of

[1] Acts vi. [2] Acts xv. 30.
[3] Acts i. 15-26. [4] 1 Peter v. 3.
[5] *The Church in the Roman Empire before A.D.* 170, p. 367.

all; each could thwart the power of his colleagues; no idea of acting by vote of the majority existed."

Fiske, in his *American Political Ideas*,[1] remarks: "As [1] for the principle of *representation*, that seems to have been an invention of the Teutonic mind;[2] no statesman of antiquity, [2] either in Greece or at Rome, seems to have conceived the idea of a city sending delegates armed with plenary powers to represent its interests in a general legislative assembly".

Freeman also in his *American Lectures*[3] says: "In these [3] small (Grecian) commonwealths *representation* is unknown; whatever powers may be entrusted to individual magistrates or to smaller councils, the supreme authority must rest with an assembly in which every qualified citizen gives his vote in his own person".

Perhaps some little exception should be taken to this statement. The Athenian "boule" or second chamber or senate —which was mainly advisory and assistant to the real governing body, *i.e.*, the ecclesia or popular assembly of all the citizens, alluded to by Freeman—was composed of 500 members. Each of the ten tribes, of which the whole community consisted, returned fifty of these members. The fifty allotted to each tribe were divided over its *demes* or villages in proportion to the respective populations of the latter. But they were not elected by their constituents, being in every case chosen *by lot* from a list of citizens (who must be thirty years old).

Taking this as the high-water mark of Greek representation, it will be seen that, as a democratic method, it was far inferior to the principle of the direct election by the constituency of the Christian Ecclesia, of ruling committees, each

[1] P. 59.

[2] How could a thoughtful writer make this remark in presence of the election record of Acts vi.? What but the dread of the *odium theologicum* could for so many centuries have deterred historians from venturing on New Testament investigation?

[3] P. 246.

for its particular department; and immeasurably so when, as will presently be shown, the election was combined with the further strikingly novel and far-reaching representative principle described on p. 67 *seq.*

In investigating the origins of representative government, we cannot forget that *tribal* representation, both for general and specific purposes, is quite prominent in the early history of the Jews: the twelve tribal princes associated with Moses and afterwards with Joshua,[1] and the twelve tribal representatives chosen to spy out the promised land,[2] being conspicuous examples. That the spies were *elected*[3] appears probable from the words, "shall ye send a man, every one a prince among them";[4] and that the twelve princes, who under the leadership of Moses and Aaron numbered the people, were similarly chosen seems distinctly suggested by the phrase in Num. i. 16, "called of the congregation," which appears also in Num. xvi. 2, in the reference to the 250 princes "called to the assembly".

It seems probable also, on comparing the subjoined references,[5] that the large number of men appointed, at Jethro's urgent advice, to be "heads" in the community to assist Moses in bearing the burden of administration were elected by the people: the correct rendering of the phrase being "Give you wise men," etc.; the men chosen being then duly inducted by Moses. The same impression (election by the community) is left on the mind after examining the numerous references to the "elders" of the people in both Old[6] and New Testaments;[7] some of them dating beyond

[1] Num. i. 4 *seq.*; ii. 3 *seq.*; Josh. ix. 15.

[2] Num. xiii. 1 *seq.*; Deut. i. 22, 23.

[3] Were not these twelve in effect a committee which presented a majority and a minority report?—(Num. xiii. to xiv. 10).

[4] Num. xiii. 2.

[5] Exod. xviii. 12-26; xxiv. 1, 2; Num. xi. 16-30; Deut. i. 12-17; xxvii. 1.

[6] Exod. iii. 16; iv. 29; xii. 21; Lev. iv. 13-21.

[7] Matt. xvi. 21; xxi. 23; xxvi. 3, 47; xxvii. 1; Acts iv. 8.

the Exodus. Moses' government of the children of Israel *seems* on a first glance to be essentially theocratic. It is certain, however, that he always treats the elders as representatives,[1] as does also Joshua,[2] and that God Himself set the example in this respect.[3]

With *voting* it is clear the Jews were quite familiar, as is manifest from the above-cited and also the following passages: "And he was numbered with" (literally, "voted in amongst") "the eleven apostles";[4] "and I gave my vote against them".[5] The delegates mentioned in Acts xv. 22 and 2 Cor. viii. 18, 19 must have been elected by vote.

If there is one lesson in Bible statesmanship more prominent than another, it is that rulers are to be regarded as the representatives and agents of the people; that God holds the latter responsible for their rulers' acts; and makes them and their children pay the penalty of wicked rule.[6] And since there cannot be responsibility without control, it follows that it is the duty of the people to depose those rulers who persistently and hopelessly betray their trust, and corrupt and thus endanger the life of the community or the nation by their evil deeds.

It is deeply significant that whereas not one of the fifteen references by Matthew, Mark and Luke to the "chief priests and elders" or to the "chief priests, elders and scribes" in plotting and bringing about the judicial murder of Christ places elders *first*, Christ Himself, in each of these three writers' records of His prophecy of what the rulers would do to Him, places elders in the forefront as mainly responsible.[7] Why? Evidently because they were *the representatives of the*

[1] Deut. i. 13, 22, 23; xxxi. 28; xxxii. 7.
[2] Josh. xxiii. 1, 2, 3; xxiv. 1, 2, 16, 21, 24, 25.
[3] Exod. iii. 16; Lev. iv. 1, 2, 13, 14, 15.
[4] Acts i. 26.
[5] Acts xxvi. 10.
[6] Compare 2 Kings xxi. 16 with xxiv. 1-4; Matt. xxiii. 35, 36; xxvii. 25.
[7] Matt. xvi. 21; Mark viii. 31; Luke ix. 22.

people[1]—the people who, without protest, permitted all three (elders, chief priests and scribes) to concert and carry out the unspeakable crime.[2] It goes without saying that God-fearing men, in a professedly Christian nation, are bound to do their utmost to bring about just and righteous administration by the State. Clearly one of their duties is to publicly reprove a wicked government for its acts, even if, like John the Baptist, they lose their heads for their faithfulness.[3] Their numbers may be too small, then and there, to regenerate their nation by their witness for the truth, but that is not required of them; they save their conscience in doing their human part, and the ultimate results are with Him who allows no word or deed in line with His will to "fall to the ground".

> Full often, we know already,
> When the arm of the conqueror fails,
> When the wise have sunk despairing
> The martyr at last prevails.

Further, if Christians are bound by all right means to maximise their influence and power for good, it is obvious they cannot content themselves with *individually* practising and proclaiming the truth. In presence of the State-sanctioned evils which surround us, as the direct outcome of the separatism which has shorn us of our Samson locks, we must aim unceasingly at that union which alone can secure us the just and effective *representation* of our views in the councils of the municipality and the State.[4] In the dark days of Israel,

[1] Compare Luke xix. 47 with xx. i.

[2] Matt. xxvii. 25. See also Acts ii. 23; iii. 13, 14.

[3] Christ, it is plain, classified men from the divine view-point. In showing how the privileges of His followers far exceeded those enjoyed by the greatest men of the old covenant, He ranked the most persecuted yet noblest characters in history *before* sovereign potentates. "For I say unto you, that many prophets and kings desired to see the things which ye see, and saw them not; and to hear the things which ye hear, and heard them not" (Luke x. 24).

[4] If we believe that "the saints of the Most High shall receive the Kingdom, and possess the Kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever," must we not begin by letting His Kingdom come and His will be done now *in our own ranks*? That would bring us all into line and enable Him to lead a united and resistless army against Satan's strongholds in every city and state.

when God raised up Elijah, there were 7,000 men who had not bowed the knee to Baal, but they appear to have done so little *in concert* that Elijah did not even know of their existence.[1] It is true he had been secluded from the community, for three and a half years, but, if the 7,000 had acted together, he would surely have learned something of their faithfulness. [1]

An unbiassed examination of the election of Acts vi. furnishes an extremely interesting study. It first of all shows us the apostles in Jerusalem, virtually in the capacity of missionaries, laying the foundation-stone of the *organisation* of the first Christian Ecclesia, and thereby making a great precedent for all missionaries in after ages. It next suggests to us a series of considerations which seem to completely overthrow the prevailing ecclesiastical tradition that the body then chosen and appointed were "deacons" (*diakonoi*), *i.e.*, servants under the authority of rulers; in other words, officials acting under the direction and control of the apostles. As the point involved has a vital bearing on the question of the real constitution of the apostolic Ecclesia, it may be desirable to state these considerations in some detail.

They are nowhere called "deacons" in the record. In Acts xxi. 8 they are simply referred to as "the seven".

It seems an unwarranted reflection upon the wisdom (to say nothing of the inspiration) of the apostles to conclude that the first act of organisation of an institution which was destined to outlast all others,[2] was the election and appointment, not of its rulers, but of its servants.[3] [2] [3]

[1] 1 Kings xix. 10-18. [2] Rev. xxi. 9; Eph. v. 25, 26, 27; 2 Cor. xi. 2.

[3] Phil. i. 1. Does not the love of power, against which Christ so earnestly and affectionately warned His apostles and followers (Matt. xxiii. 6-12; Mark x. 41-45), and of which, after the death of the apostles, there were to be such dreadful developments in His Ecclesia, go far to explain why the prelates of the third and following centuries assumed this election to have been one of deacons only, albeit they took very good care to nullify it as a precedent which might in any way tend to limit their own authority over them?

As "the seven" were elected directly by, and were therefore responsible solely to, the *plēthos* or whole assemblage of
[1] the community,[1] obviously no other body could control or interfere with their administration. As self-governing they had plenary power within their sphere; in this, differing vitally from such bodies as our modern municipal committees which are not elected *to their departments* by the citizens, and whose policy is subject to revision and, not infrequently, rejection by the overriding authority which selects them for
[2] these departments, *i.e.*, the city council as a whole.[2] There is, however, an English committee whom, in general character and function, they much more closely resemble—the directly elected and therefore autonomous Boards of Guardians of the Poor, to whom we suppose nobody will deny the status of representative rulers: cribbed and cabined though they so often are by the national Local Government Board.

It may here be fittingly asked—If "the seven" of Acts vi. were deacons, what body of rational men—knowing that responsibility involves control—would consent to take charge of a department whose "servants," having the direct mandate of the constituency, could completely repudiate their authority, and that, too, with His sanction who said: "No
[3] man can serve two masters"; [3] "If a house be divided against
[4] itself, that house will not be able to stand"? [4]

It need scarcely be mentioned that there is not the smallest hint elsewhere in the record of the election of deacons by the
[5] Ecclesia members.[5]

As conclusive evidence will be forthcoming in a later

[1] Acts xv. 30.

[2] As the council members, without reference to the electors, distribute among themselves the several departments on which they act, they are obviously judges in their own case. The members of the committees are chosen by the council's "nomination committee".

[3] Matt. vi. 24. [4] Mark iii. 25.

[5] Everything on the contrary goes to show that they were chosen by, and acted under the direction of, the elders (see p. 80 *seq.*).

chapter that the rulers *were* so elected, it may suffice at this stage simply to draw attention to the point (p. 104 *seq*).

Two of "the seven," Stephen and Philip, were we know men of the very front rank. Indeed the apostles, in their directions for electing the committee to their department, designate their own *ministry* or *service* by the same Greek word as theirs. This word (*diakonos*), in connection with, or in the sense of, service, is used very many times in Paul's epistles, not only when referring to the service of the apostles but to the transcendent service of Christ Himself: the idea being that ministry to men meant service to God; as Paul shows it does in the case also of temporal rulers.[1] Another [1]
Greek word, literally importing much lower social rank (*doulos*, bondman or slave), is very often used of themselves and Christians generally by the writers of the epistles to express their purchase and ownership by, and absolute devotion to, their Redeemer, Christ. Such heart service is, however, it will readily be perceived, quite distinct from deaconship as official function.

Their qualifications for the office—"men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom"—may be regarded as an epitome of those of the *episkopos*, *i.e.*, bishop, elder, presbyter, overseer or ruler specified by Paul.[2] [2]

(1) "Of good report" because, however highly qualified otherwise a man may be, if his reputation has been destroyed by a false report, he must not take office in the Ecclesia till he has first cleared his character. (2) "Full of the Spirit": even this central and transcendently important qualification, plus the first, will not suffice, unless a man is also (3) "Full of wisdom". "A novice" might be "puffed up";[3] he [3]
might have "a zeal for God but not according to knowledge";[4] he might lack the gift (*charisma*[5]) necessary for [4] [5]

[1] Rom. xiii. 3, 4. [2] 1 Tim. iii. 1-7. [3] 1 Tim. iii. 6.
[4] Rom. x. 2. [5] 1 Cor. xii. 5, 8.

the particular work. Who can doubt that the fishermen who embodied these all-embracing qualifications in such few words [1] were inspired by Him who "knew what was in man";[1] or that they point us to the directly elected *rulers*, not the servants, of the spiritual community?

There seems every reason to believe that "the elders" who received the Antioch community's relief contribution for the [2] Judæan brethren[2] were the committee (or its successors) of Acts vi. It is scarcely conceivable that Paul and Barnabas would hand over this money, or the subsequent general "col- [3] lection for the saints" in need in Jerusalem[3] to any other body than the one specially elected to administer the poor-relief fund. And thus the ecclesiastical view that the deacons of an Ecclesia had charge of its alms fund cannot be reconciled with the fact that the Antioch subscription was handed not to "deacons" but to "elders".

They were solemnly inducted into office by the laying on of the apostles' hands, which we cannot suppose would have been done on the appointment of a merely temporary body as some judge them to have been. Indeed we know that there were "poor among the saints," and need, therefore, for the committee's continued work at Jerusalem for many years [4] after this.[4] And as persecution, sickness, bereavement or self-denial has led to more or less straitened circumstances amongst members of Christian communities in all ages since, it seems a fully justified conclusion that Acts vi. describes the election by the Ecclesia of a permanent Members' Aid Committee. Probably nothing could have better illustrated the true character and spirit of the Christian Ecclesia than

[1] John ii. 25. [2] Acts xi. 27-30.
[3] Rom. xv. 31; 1 Cor. xvi. 1; 2 Cor. viii. 4.
[4] Rom. xv. 26.

the fact that its first body of elders was elected[1] to "remember the poor".[2]

The Members' Aid Committee were the first elders elected by the Ecclesia,[3] and it was thus in every way fitting that they should be the first to be designated as such.

Was it not now therefore "the mind of the Spirit" that the second of the two great branches of Christ's Ecclesia work—the physical and material blessing of men—should be formally inaugurated by this monumental election, and accordingly that the appointment of "the seven" should be signalised by their being the first of all the members of His communities to receive the "laying on of hands"? The account of the election markedly illustrates Luke's plan in the Acts of recording initial and thus foundation things.

In the Revelation, John symbolically describes Christ's twelve apostles as the "twelve foundations" of the wall of the "new Jerusalem"; their names appear on these[4] and are also carefully recorded by Matthew, Mark and Luke.[5]

When we come to consider the significance of the symbol *seven* employed at the founding of the directly and proportionally elected departmental committee,[6] it will not surprise us that, there also, the names of the "foundation-stones" are given.[7]

This first committee was formed for a beneficent *temporal* object and was the forerunner of all joint *ad hoc* efforts prompted by Christian love to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, heal the sick, undo the heavy burdens, and break every yoke.[8]

[1] It is worthy of note that although the community now comprised thousands of members (Acts ii. 41-47; iv. 4; v. 14-16), the whole business of this election seems to have been tranquilly carried out and followed with the happiest results (Acts vi. 5-7).

[2] Gal. ii. 10.

[3] It may here be noted that, albeit the community was as yet only in process of organisation, Luke refers to it as an Ecclesia before this election was held. See Acts v. 11.

[4] Rev. xxi. 14; Eph. ii. 20.

[5] Matt. x. 2-4; Mark iii. 14-19; Luke vi. 12-16.

[6] P. 67 *seq.*

[7] Acts vi. 5.

[8] See p. 64.

In Acts xiii. we have a glimpse of another departmental body of elders: the five "prophets and teachers" in the Antioch Ecclesia—pioneers of all missionary and other specific committee work in the immeasurably important *spiritual* sphere—and who perhaps may be justly called the world's first foreign missionary committee. Here again the record [1] fittingly gives us the names of the foundation-stones.[1]

The first of the list is Barnabas, the liberal, large- [2] souled Hellenist,[2] who, when the ruthless persecutor Saul returned to Jerusalem a Christian convert and all were "afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple," gave him the right hand of fellowship and "brought him to the [3] apostles".[3]

The last in the roll is Saul himself, of whom Christ had declared "he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of [4] Israel".[4]

Their painful consciousness as Hellenists that Antioch was the only known organised outpost of Christianity in the [5] Gentile world,[5] together probably with a deepening resolve that the lesson of the scattering abroad of the Jerusalem Christians should accomplish its providential design, evidently inflamed their desire to proclaim the "glad tidings" to the Greeks and Romans; and thus they "ministered to the Lord, and fasted" till "the Holy Ghost" directed them to separate Barnabas and Saul for their memorable missionary work.

Drawn together by their common yearning, they were now by this command of the Spirit definitely constituted an evangelisation committee. That, as such, they formed part

[1] Acts xiii. 1. [2] Acts iv. 36, 37; xi. 22-26.
[3] Acts ix. 26, 27. [4] Acts ix. 15.
[5] Numbers of the foreign Jews who had been converted at the Pentecostal gathering would, however, doubtless preach Christ in their several localities.

of the Ecclesia organisation is indicated by the circumstance that the two whom they appointed *reported to the Ecclesia as a whole* on their return from their missionary campaign.[1] Further, we cannot overlook the fact that the Spirit did not choose the two *directly*, but expressly *through their colleagues.* As their function "in the Ecclesia" is distinctly stated, and it is certain they were in the habit of meeting together, they may in the first instance have been a committee of "prophets[2] and teachers". It is true nothing is said of their election or appointment either as a teaching or an evangelisation committee. But was any reference to this necessary?

The apostolic precedent furnished by the institution of the Ecclesia's (and the world's) first directly and proportionally elected departmental committee had already been made and described, and it evidently sufficed for Luke's method as a recorder.[3] Moreover, the unnamed Jerusalem refugees who founded the Antioch community[4] (the mother of so many others) were familiar with the democratic election both of the apostle who succeeded Judas[5] and of this first committee of the Jerusalem Ecclesia,[6] and in all probability they acted upon their knowledge.

Further, Barnabas himself, the deputy of the twelve apostles[7] and from the first a witness of their organisation,[8] would, we may be sure, see that everything was "done decently and in order," in the Antioch Ecclesia after he joined its membership and administration. We may therefore safely assume that so far as the apostolic precedents as yet made were applicable, they would be loyally followed; and accordingly that, like the committee of Acts vi., the Antioch prophets and teachers were, sooner or later, formally elected

[1] Acts xiv. 26-28.
[2] See p. 98.
[3] See p. 77.
[4] See p. 195 *seq.*
[5] Acts i. 15-26.
[6] Acts vi. 1-6.
[7] Acts xi. 22, 26.
[8] Acts iv. 36, 37.

and appointed to their post. The question "Who *appointed* them?" may more conveniently be considered later.[1]

The use, in both verses 2 and 3 of Acts xiii., of the same word "they," makes it clear that the apostles were appointed by their fellow committee-men, not by the members of the Ecclesia. The Ecclesia rule or principle enjoined in the Epistle to Corinth—"the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets"[2]—doubtless among other things means (*a*) that the minority of them must accept the decision of the majority, also (*b*) that, though subject to their fellows, they are not subject to any other body. Indeed, it is of the essence of administration by elected *ad hoc* committees that each of them minds its own business and is not "a meddler in other men's matters".[3]

As regards any action in the matter by the Ecclesia generally, there would without doubt be a valedictory gathering of the community to wish them "God-speed," but not to officially sanction or confirm the course taken by one of its duly empowered executive bodies acting within its sphere.

Here a little reflection will show us why, in the case both of Ecclesia and city government, the acts of a departmental committee are assumed to be those of the entire administration of which it forms a part. If the gas committee of a municipality sells coke to a merchant and he resells it to a consumer at an exorbitant profit, the latter may declare, "I will in future buy from the corporation direct". Of course that is common parlance, and he means he will purchase direct from the *gas committee*—not from "the mayor, aldermen and burgesses" of whom, strictly speaking, the corporation is composed. And the Lord Jesus Himself, in directing Christian disciples how to act in the third stage of a misunderstanding with a brother, and after "one or two" intermediaries have been called in, says: "If he refuse to hear them, tell it unto

[1] See p. 110 *seq.* [2] 1 Cor. xiv. 32. [3] 1 Peter iv. 15.

the Ecclesia: and if he refuse to hear the Ecclesia also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican".[1] [1]

Now if a New Testament Ecclesia is, as we have endeavoured to show, the whole body of Christians in a given centre of population, this direction *read literally* would mean that a dispute between two Christians is to be laid before a gathering of (perhaps) thousands of their fellow-believers,[2] [2] which is manifestly absurd. That would be a reversion to the practice of the tempestuous Greek civic Ecclesia.[3] No! [3] the meaning doubtless is that the quarrel is to be judged by a body duly chosen by the Ecclesia members to settle disputes, and which—being the agent of—is in effect "the Ecclesia".

By a like reasoning, we conclude that the generic is used for the specific in various other passages, *e.g.*, the Antioch Christians "determined to send relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Judæa: which also they did, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul,"[4] *i.e.*, they forwarded it, [4] not to the whole body of elders, but, doubtless, to the relief committee of Acts vi. And James' direction, in the case of a sick disciple, to "call for the elders of the Ecclesia,"[5] ob- [5] viously means, not that the whole eldership is to be brought to the sick-bed nor even all the (presumed) sick-visiting committee, but probably one or two members of the latter. We all know the legal axiom, "What a man does by another he does by himself".[6] [6]

In discussing this phase of our subject, it should be borne in mind that, whilst the principle of the election of departmental committees is clearly illustrated in the New Testa-

[1] Matt. xviii. 17. [2] Acts ii. 41; iv. 4; xxi. 20. [3] See p. 68.

[4] Acts xi. 29, 30. [5] James v. 14.

[6] See Lev. iv. 13-15. Naboth was judicially murdered by "the elders and the nobles" of Jezreel, who were the tools of Jezebel, who was the instrument of her husband Ahab, whom God, through His agent, Elijah, judged for the crime. See 1 Kings xxi., specially v. 19.

ment, the practice of numbers of infant Ecclesias *may* have been simply to elect a general body empowered to deal with the many questions relating to government and cognate matters.

Had the election of *ad hoc* bodies become general—with the certain result of increased interest on the part of the members in all departments of Ecclesia work—would not an effective barrier everywhere have been reared against the insidious advance of the claims of any man or body of men to dominate the community, to whose members Christ said: "Whosoever would be first among you, shall be slave of all"?[1]

On p. 102 *seq.* reference is made at some length to the "presbytery" (*presbuterion*, body of elders)[2] which laid hands on Timothy.[3] This word *presbuterion* occurs nowhere else in connection with the apostolic organisation. Presbyterians generally, we believe, hold that it points to the entire eldership of the Ecclesia with which Timothy was associated. There are, however, at least five mentions in the New Testament of whole bodies of Ecclesia elders, and in none of them is the word *presbuterion* found.[4] That, it is true, is only negative evidence. In a later chapter, however (Chap. VI.), it will be shown that the Ecclesia elders, when convened as a council, were limited to strictly recommendatory functions:[5] and if we compare these with the national, judicial, legislative powers of the Jewish sanhedrin or supreme body of elders, chief priests and scribes[6] which is twice called a *presbuterion*,[7]

[1] Mark x. 44.

[2] Obviously our present-day conventional ideas of a "presbytery" do not fix the meaning of the word, for, "strictly speaking," as a writer in the *North American Review* (cxlii., 551) remarks, "any body of elders is a presbytery".

[3] 1 Tim. iv. 14. [4] Acts xiv. 23; xv. 2; xx. 17; xxi. 18; Tit. i. 5.

[5] See p. 84 *seq.* [6] Matt. xvi. 21; Mark viii. 31; Luke ix. 22.

[7] Luke xxii. 66; Acts xxii. 5. In many instances it is called a council (*sunedrion*); in many others simply "the elders," or "the chief priests and elders," or "the chief priests, elders and scribes". Here, as elsewhere, the thought is forced upon us that the writers of the record are much more concerned about things than names.

it would seem incredible that Paul should transfer to the new purely advisory Christian council the name of the *tribunal* which had sentenced to death his sinless Lord.

But the new departmental committee also required a name and it had no need to adopt that of the priest-ridden sanhedrin, for a much more appropriate precedent lay ready to its hand. Every body of elders ruling a Jewish city was obviously a *presbuterion*. And as the sphere and functions of the latter were local and administrative, like those of the Ecclesia committees, it seems more than likely that, in conformity with the civic non-ecclesiastical character of the whole Ecclesia organisation, the name *presbuterion* was derived from the city source and applied specifically to the new committees albeit, governmentally speaking, the latter, as *ad hoc* bodies, were such a great advance upon any city or other organisation the world had hitherto known.

If we give due weight to the fact that the Ecclesia whose presbytery appointed Timothy was founded by Paul and Barnabas, who had themselves been appointed by a committee or body of elders (and therefore a presbytery) of the Antioch Ecclesia,[1] we may justly conclude that such appointment was not by the whole eldership of the community (for there is no such precedent among the Acts of the Apostles, and it would manifestly be absurd for a Members' Aid Committee, like that of Acts vi., to take part in the appointment of men for missionary work) but by an appropriate departmental presbytery. 1

The unique governmental principles of the Ecclesia must have powerfully impressed the mind and heart of the great organiser Paul; and it may be that — anxious to make Timothy realise the solemnity of his appointment by his fellow-elders and the significance of its accompanying divine *charisma*—he was now first led to call the departmental

[1] Acts xiii. 1-3.

committee a *presbuterion*. These new and most important
[1] bodies could not always be called "the seven,"[1] the five, etc.

Paul's direction "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially those who labour in the
[2] word and in teaching,"[2] shows not only that ability to rule is an essential qualification for the office, but also that there were *presbuteroi* or elders over Ecclesia work which, like that of Christ's own healing of the sick and feeding of the multi-
[3] tudes, was largely of a temporal, not spiritual, nature.[3]

A hint of another departmental committee will be found in 1 Cor. vi. 1-8. There Paul laments that the Corinthian Christians had "set them to judge who were of no account in the Ecclesia"; with the natural consequence that "brother goeth to law with brother, and that before unbelievers". He probes them deeply by asking whether they have so lost their morale "that there cannot be found among" them "one wise man, who shall be able to decide between his brethren," and then adding, if they are in that melancholy plight, "Why not rather take wrong? Why not rather be defrauded" than go to law? His obvious moral is that they should put their ablest and most honourable men, not
[4] their nonentities,[4] on their Conciliation and Arbitration Committee. That he is not suggesting *single* judges is clear
[5] from the phrase in v. 1, "before the saints".[5]

All through the Old and New Testaments we find elders associated with civil rule; and it is thus strongly suggestive of the civic character of the Ecclesia administration that its governing body is composed of elders, *i.e.*, representative governors of the Christian community of a city, not autocratic rulers (always styled *archisunagogos*) of religious services

[1] Acts xxi. 8. Even Christians had no distinctive name till about seven years after Christ's ascension (Acts xi. 26).

[2] 1 Tim. v. 17. [3] See p. 72. [4] V. 4.

[5] The final court of appeal for England, Scotland and Ireland is a committee of judges composed of the highest law lords and deciding by a majority vote.

and buildings, as the heads of the Jewish synagogues would appear to have been.[1] [1]

Paul, familiar with the many Old Testament references to city elders, directs his missionary helper Titus to "appoint elders in every city";[2] precisely the statesmanlike instruction [2] we would expect from the governor of a British colony filling up with gold miners and destined to be self-governing.

As we find a Jerusalem committee doing the non-spiritual work of ministering to physical needs[3] and an Antioch one [3] carrying on the highest spiritual work, that of evangelisation,[4] [4] it seems reasonable to suppose that the various intermediate branches of *joint* Ecclesia work were likewise intended to be undertaken by departmental bodies.

In England and America we know how, through inter-denominational committee effort, countless committees of evangelical Christians of all denominations are to-day harmoniously working philanthropic movements, and other directly spiritual agencies—ragged schools, city missions, joint foreign missions and evangelistic missions.

On p. 104 *seq.* attention is drawn to the significant absence of direction and precedent in the New Testament as to the election, appointment and local sphere of the large and extremely important class of elders doing pastoral and teaching work, and who have obviously a very distinct province from that of the departmental elders. An endeavour is there made to show that such *purposely designed omission* provides for the development of various types of pastoral and teaching administration by the different tribes or denominations who were to appear in due time, and were intended to be federally united in each Ecclesia. Here, on the other hand, we would simply emphasise the fact that the first great precedents made by the apostles in organising the Jerusalem Ecclesia involved the *joint action* of all its members: *embodying govern-*

[1] See p. 39 *seq.* [2] Tit. i. 5. [3] Acts vi. 1-6. [4] Acts xiii. and xiv.

mental principles which were themselves securities for union, and which, if followed by the Christian denominations of each city to-day, would inevitably ensure their reunion as "a body". We allude to:—

(*a*) The democratic vote of the 120.

(*b*) The *ad hoc* election of the first departmental committee by the whole Ecclesia.

(*c*) *That* election so planned as to secure a just representation of all sections of opinion and conviction.

(*d*) The reference, to the whole constituency of the Jerusalem Ecclesia, of its Referendum Council's conclusions on
[1] the Antioch appeal.[1]

As the greater includes the less, it is obvious that constituencies which choose their departmental committees can elect them for any term they please. In all free communities either increased knowledge or entirely new developments may lead the electors or the elected to change or modify their views; and as election for life, or for very long periods, has been found to tend to misgovernment and the dissatisfaction of the governed, it becomes necessary, in conformity with the fundamental democratic principle of the Ecclesia, to *keep the governing body representative* by subjecting it to re-election at more or less brief intervals.

In a Christian Ecclesia, resolved to "let all things be
[2] done decently and in order,"[2] there would naturally follow a periodical and simultaneous election of all its committees.
[3] God has given us reasoning faculties as co-workers with Him.[3] The garden of Eden was made for man, but it was man's part "to dress it and to keep it". He thus entrusts to us what we are competent to do for ourselves, *i.e.*, the intelligent co-ordinating of the work of His Ecclesia in harmonious conformity with the great *principles* revealed in His word.

[1] See p. 84 *seq.* [2] 1 Cor. xiv. 40. [3] 1 Cor. iii. 9; 2 Cor. vi. 1.

The direction in Acts vi. 3 to elect *seven* men has been a difficulty to many commentators. But if we keep steadily in view the fact that every precedent made by the apostles embodied some great principle for the guidance of future Ecclesias, light is thrown on its practical meaning. It is generally admitted that, throughout the Old and New Testaments, *seven* is the symbolic number for completeness; and that it was probably suggested by God's complete week of creative work and Sabbath rest.[1] 1

We need cite a few only of the multitude of examples of its Scriptural use in this sense: (*a*) Christ's messages "to the seven Ecclesias which are in Asia".[2] These seven Christian 2
societies furnish a complete representation of the virtues which may strengthen and adorn, and the vices which may degrade and ruin Ecclesia life; and thus their characters, as portrayed in Christ's solemn words, serve as an encouragement and warning to Christian communities in all succeeding ages.

(*b*) Peter took six men with him to Cæsarea, thus making, with himself, seven witnesses of God's direct admission of the Gentile centurion Cornelius into the Kingdom of Christ. More conclusive evidence of that extraordinary development could not have been desired by the most conservative Jewish mind.[3] 3

We gather then that the constituency[4] were instructed to 4
elect a committee which should be complete.

Now in what senses can a committee acting for others be considered complete? In two vitally important respects.

[1] "The number seven denotes completeness and was much noted by the Jewish commentators, etc." (Dean Alford, *New Testament for English Readers.* Note to Rev. i. 4).

[2] Rev. i., ii., iii.

[3] Acts x. 23-44; xi. 12. Of other examples from the Old Testament the following out of many may be mentioned: Gen. vii. 2; xxi. 30; Exod. xii. 15; Lev. iv. 6; xiv. 7; xxv. 2, 3, 4, 8; Deut. xvi. 9, 13; Josh. vi. 4; Ruth iv. 15; 1 Kings viii. 65; 2 Kings v. 10; Ps. xii. 6; and in the New Testament the seven petitions of the Lord's Prayer and the examples in Revelations.

[4] Acts vi. 3.

(1) Its members must *personally* be completely qualified for their work; and (2) an elective body must also be *representatively* complete. Such a committee as that of Acts vi. would not be complete unless it (*a*) consisted of men of high reputation, character and gift, and (*b*) was capable of *equitably representing the different views prevailing amongst the constituency by whom it was chosen and employed.*

The proportional representation of all sections upon a committee prevents the unfettered dominance of any one view or set of opinions, the severance of limbs from the body, the proud, intolerant, foolish announcement by the trunk to the hands and feet, "I have no need of you". An incidental advantage of the system is that it makes practically impossible the sweeping away of a whole committee by mere popular impulse, their replacement by new and inexperienced men, and the consequent assumption of the real control by stipendiary officials. One or more sections (minorities), uninfluenced by the wave of feeling which might carry away the majority, would be sure to re-elect their representatives.

A priori it would seem to be an ideal system for a community to constitute *all* its citizens its governing assembly. In actual experience, however, as the history of the Greek civic Ecclesia showed, the principle has proved a hopeless failure. A promiscuous crowd which can be lashed to frenzy by an unscrupulous demagogue may make mob laws, but it can do neither the duties of an executive nor the plodding deliberative
1 work of a true legislative assembly.[1]

[1] "The people in the United States . . . planted, as they are, over large dominions, cannot meet in one assembly, and therefore are not exposed to those tumultuous commotions, like the raging waves of the sea which always agitated the Ecclesia at Athens" (J. Adams' *Works*, iv., 491). In Switzerland, in the Glarus and Uri cantons, and in Unterwalden's two half and Appenzell's two half cantons, the whole male population in each case form the Landsgemeinde which meets once a year and is the supreme authority. But, as Rambert remarks, "The Landsgemeinde have always retained something of the vivacity and

The practical question then is, how to obtain a body whose members are not only personally qualified for their work, but who, at the same time, so represent all sections of opinion upon the policy to be pursued as to make it manifest that they are the quintessence of the electorate, in other words, a microcosm of the entire community.

In our own day the majority vote has become a kind of fetish with many who forget that it often leaves nearly half a voting constituency as completely unrepresented as Russian serfs. A majority vote might, for example, have left the aggrieved Hellenists of the Jerusalem Ecclesia without a single representative on the new administrative board! On the other hand, where only one person has to be elected,[1] or 1
one point to be decided, majority voting is obviously the only available system.

But, where a body of persons has to be chosen to administer a department which may have to deal with novel and complicated questions, it should not be forgotten that far-reaching reforms and great policies often begin with one person, and that it is frequently one man's acumen or sagacity which solves a serious difficulty.[2] 2

The election, therefore, instead of returning representatives of only one or other of the great parties—whichever happens to be in the majority—should be so planned as to cull the best minds from all sections of the community, and in the just proportion of their following. By that system a fair hearing is secured to each; even to a party so small that its quota of votes would give it only a single representative to

impulsiveness of great crowds. It is a nervous government which has fits of exaltation and fits of depression" (Rambert, "Les Landsgemeinde de la Suisse" in *Les Alpes Suisse*, p. 325, Lausanne, 1889).

[1] Acts i. 15 *seq.*; xi. 22; 2 Cor. viii. 18, 19.

[2] Eccles. ix. 15.

advocate its new and possibly true policy on the influential
[1] plane of the governing board.[1]

It should further be remembered that there are numbers of people in every community who regard high principle, joined to great administrative ability, as a more important qualification in a ruler than his support and advocacy of a particular view. For that section of the constituency, as well as for those who hold that high character and ability must be accompanied by loyal devotion to a given policy, equitable representation should be provided.

Whether or no the apostles and their auditory perceived the symbolic significance of the inspired direction as to "seven," we cannot say; it is certain that the voters obeyed it literally by electing just seven persons: all of them probably men of high character, if we may judge from the two we know, the evangelists Stephen and Philip.

We know that the apostle John in the Apocalypse, those
[2] members of the Ecclesias who had the gift of tongues,[2]
[3] Daniel,[3] and other prophets of old, were, as mouthpieces of the Holy Spirit, often largely if not wholly unconscious of
[4] the hidden import of their utterances.[4] It may well, therefore, have been that a principle was being sown which should bear fuller fruit when, as in the Reformation movement, definite schools of thought began to develop among Christians, each

[1] Had proportional representation on departmental committees been in vogue in the Christian churches a hundred years ago, the pioneers of the Temperance and other great movements would have had an early hearing for their views and the full representative status to which that following entitled them, on governing bodies and in denominational conferences. As things were, these reforms had to be agitated outside by individual Christians; and thus the churches not only lost the credit of leadership in the public eye, but also most valuable teaching for their members on many important questions. In consequence, a low standard of opinion and practice in regard to prevailing evils has continued in numbers of churches even to this year of grace 1907.

[2] 1 Cor. xiv. 27, 28. [3] Dan. xii. 7, 8, 9.

[4] 1 Peter i. 10, 11, 12; 2 Peter i. 20, 21.

of which would require equitable representation in the spiritual Zion.[1] Now that, in the fulness of time, the tribes have arrived, shall we not make "the body of Christ" complete by equitably representing all its limbs, organs and members on its various governing committees?[2]

Had the first Protestant reformers enjoyed our present-day peace and leisure, they might have been led to scientifically investigate the governmental principles of the apostolic Ecclesia, *wholly* uninfluenced by the inherited traditional systems of "the early fathers". This might, amongst other things, have revealed to them the directly elective and personally and representatively complete, departmental committee; and it would not then have been left to nineteenth century political reformers to rediscover the principle of proportional representation, and then (in the case of England) largely to nullify it at School Board elections on the crude lines of the "cumulative vote".

How far it is possible to obtain completeness in personal qualification is an interesting practical question. The ideal spiritual ruler portrayed by Paul[3] has probably not yet been seen in the flesh; and it is certain that Christ's injunction "Ye therefore shall be perfect even as your heavenly Father is perfect" has never been flawlessly obeyed by any Christian. But we are nevertheless all urged, by the study and assimilation of "the Word," to aim that "the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work".[4] It is obviously of vital importance that the departmental elder or

[1] Rev. xxi. 14, 19, 20.

[2] There is one consideration which, as it *may* have influenced the action of the Jerusalem Ecclesia members, should not be entirely overlooked. The seven men elected have all Greek names; and, though this does not necessarily imply that they were all Hellenists, it *may* indicate that the Hebrews, utterly repudiating nepotist motives and resolved at whatever cost to convince the complainants of their generous intentions, sacrificed all their share of representation and elected no one who had not a Greek name!

[3] 1 Tim. iii.

[4] 2 Tim. iii. 15-17.

committee-man should be "of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom" like the committee elders of Acts vi. 3—qualifications which are more fully described in 1 Tim. iii. 2-7. The "wisdom"—the intellectual gift—will necessarily differ greatly in kind: membership of a poor-relief committee, specially requiring a knowledge of character;
1 of a conciliation and arbitration[1] committee, a calm, clear, judicial mind, great knowledge of human nature, of the principles of justice and of the rules of evidence; of an elections committee or of a meetings committee, a faculty of organisation; of a journal committee, decided literary gift, openness of mind and extensive general knowledge, and so on.

One word here as to the educative influence upon the Ecclesia voter of the New Testament system of election. Immediately he realises that his opinion is required on every departmental subject, his dignity and self-respect will be increased. This will impel him to study the various facts and principles underlying the efficiency and fruitfulness of the several departmental bodies. His knowledge being thereby enlarged and his sympathies broadened, his practical interest in the work of the committees and his desire to contribute towards their support will be stimulated to that extent.

Many Christians have an undefined feeling that varied work of this kind is outside the sphere of "the Church of Christ," that the latter should concern itself solely with conversion and edification, and should leave philanthropic effort to special organisations. But should they not ask themselves—If Christ the Head went about healing the physical frames as well as the souls of men, can it be wrong for "the Ecclesia which is
2 His body"[2] to go and do likewise? Nay, has not the "institutional Church" movement the highest precedent for its auxiliary philanthropic work in the fact that "the blind and

[1] See pp. 64 and 79. [2] Eph. i. 22.

the lame came to Him in the temple: and He healed them"[1] there? The first committee of the first Christian Ecclesia was formed to minister to the physical needs of its own poor; but the injunction to "work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith,"[2] shows that the latter have only the *first* claim on our sympathies. Obviously, love to neighbour as to self is incumbent on Christians both individually and collectively; and it is thus only a question of "division of labour"—departmental organisation—how, adequately, to grapple with the vast, many-sided problems of the philanthropic engineer which love impels us to solve. Whilst, therefore, the conversion and sanctification of every man should be the transcendent aim of all Christians and Christian organisations, there should, as handmaids to this, be Ecclesia committees in every city warring against the many moral and social evils which degrade and animalise men, and against the various physical, economical and educational disabilities which deny them opportunity and motive to rise in the social and intellectual scale.[3]

Christ's descent to the world ushered in the age of philanthropy. He healed all who came to Him for deliverance from whatsoever disease they had;[4] and His apostles, then (and afterwards), did the same beneficent work.[5] We read of His conferring like miraculous powers upon "seventy others".[6] It is also *our* glorious privilege and responsibility as His followers to walk in His steps, by remedying the spiritual, social, mental and physical miseries of mankind; if not by miraculous means yet by "the power of God and the wisdom of God" placed at our disposal in Him. This can only be adequately done on apostolic lines, *i.e.*, by reuniting in every

[1] Matt. xxi. 14. [2] Gal. vi. 10.
[3] See p. 56. [4] Matt. iv. 23; ix. 35; Luke iv. 40, 41.
[5] Luke ix. 1-6; Acts v. 16; xix. 11, 12.
[6] Luke x. 9, 17-20.

city, town and village the dissevered limbs of "the body" under their divine and only Head; in other words, by our coming together in His name, as brethren, on perfectly equal terms, for united counsel, organisation and service, according to our several gifts. Thereby, bodies of specialists, scorning sectarian and partisan motives, would be formed to scientifically attack the evils of the city and the State in the name of "the Lord of Hosts"; our many devoted but disorganised Christian workers would be marshalled into order all over the field; and ere long we would see an end to "the strife of tongues," the woful welter of opposing parties, the chaos of conflicting issues and interests, which are to-day obstructing and retarding so many great and permanent reforms.

Dark as were the centuries before the Reformation, in many places a gleam of the great primal Light still lingered amid the deepening gloom. A Church which had come to regard its priestly power and pomp and wealth as its chief concern, necessarily ceased to lead the common people to Him who could not fail to emancipate them and raise them from their serf-like condition. Nevertheless, its abbeys and monasteries were often an asylum for the hungry and outcast in troublous times; and thus, until carnality destroyed the spiritual life of these corporations, the Church gained a wide reputation for its charitable deeds.

What is the moral here for ourselves? If, through centuries of sporadic effort, evangelical Christians became the pioneers of civil and religious liberty and of countless philanthropic movements, we must still face the fact that huge social evils remain entrenched among us which are the shame of our so-called Christian land, which have hitherto mocked all denominational attacks, which, in short, there is no reasonable hope of conquering except by a federal union of our forces in every centre under Him who tells us "All authority hath been
1 given unto me in heaven and on earth".[1] Then, no longer

[1] Matt. xxviii. 18.

hampered by the blighting separatism which has so minimised our influence and power with the State that we cannot induce it to uproot the legislative causes of the wretched conditions environing millions of British lives, we would be enabled, by jointly organised departmental effort, mightily to lead or assist every forward movement for the betterment of man, and thereby impel the world by our "good works" to "glorify" our "Father who is in heaven".

If it be seriously asked whether, after all, committee government is better for a community than "one-man" administration, the reply is that modern experience seems to show that the two are best worked in conjunction: the committee laying down the general principles and policy to be carried out, under their direction, by persons who are their able and trusted agents and representatives. This relation, as we will presently endeavour to show,[1] was substantially that subsisting between the New Testament rulers and servants ("bishops and deacons"[2]).

As far back as the age of the twelve representative princes who advised Moses and Joshua,[3] down to the days of the apostles who, after Christ's ascension, certainly formed the great organising committee of His Ecclesia, and thenceforward, through the departmental body of Acts vi. 3-6, that of Acts xiii. 1-3, and the presbytery mentioned by Paul,[4] on to our own times, a large and steadily growing proportion of the business of the nations has been done by bodies who, whether elected, appointed, or *ex officio*, were in effect committees. And as the foregoing references prove that the committee has divine sanction; as history has shown it to be a bulwark against both tyranny and mob law; as, in its perfected form, it is a government for all, by all, and without respect of persons; and as it is within easy reach of all classes

[1] See p. 80 *seq.*
[2] Phil. i. 1.
[3] Num. i. 4, 16; Josh. ix. 15, 18-21.
[4] 1 Tim. iv. 14.

and sections of the community, the only practical question seems to be—Why do we not take fullest advantage of the system by recasting the prevailing travesty of representative government, and organising it on the scientific *principles* of
1 the Ecclesia departmental committee?[1]

It is one object of these pages to show that the governmental precedents made by Christ's inspired apostles in organising His Ecclesia are based on fundamental, far-reaching, and in fact definitive principles of representative government; and that it would be well for the law, order, peace, progress and prosperity of the human race, if these were embodied in its ever-increasing democratic and collectivist institutions.

When Great Britain, America and other Christian nations apply these principles to the departmental government of the State, the municipality, and the great railway, industrial and other organisations, all sections of the constituencies will practically interest themselves in their policies and secure a fair hearing for their views. Centralisation (in the old sense) being ended, the dignity, independence, power for good, and, last not least, the responsibility of every member of the
2 committee[2] will be immeasurably increased. As the result, the best men in the community—specialists and authorities on great questions—who can now rarely be induced to act on committees, will be attracted to the public service, and we will cease to be told about the infinite superiority of "a committee of one," and of the increasing resort to "the boss," *i.e.*, to one-man rule, by misgoverned American cities in a state of despair.

In this connection, those who believe and pray that in the near future Christian statesmanship may be greatly used by Christ to "destroy the works of the devil" will readily per-

[1] Acts vi. 3-6.

[2] "Organisation . . . is the fixing of responsibility" (Wilcox, *The Study of City Government*, p. 232. Macmillan & Co., London, 1897).

ceive that if apostolic principles are applied *only to Christian communities, and not also to the administration of the municipality and the State*, the power for good of Christians will be seriously crippled; for it will continue most difficult to abolish those wicked and unjust laws and demoralising institutions and practices which are everywhere doing so much to undermine and defeat Christian work.[1]

If it be objected that the account of the election of a committee given in Acts vi., and the brief references to the bodies which ordained Paul and Barnabas, and Timothy,[2] can scarcely be intended to indicate the governmental constitution of all future Christian Ecclesias, the reply is that the New Testament is a book of marvellous condensation, and, albeit it has room for the frequent reiteration of life-giving spiritual truths, it has manifestly much less space for enlarging on the less important matters which concern governmental organisation.[3]

Moreover, Luke's plan, as a recorder, in Acts is to give "detailed accounts of each first member of a series";[4] and if in all things, governmental and other, we are to regard the

[1] During past decades, for example, an enormous amount of money and effort has, we know, been expended in the United Kingdom in educating the people on the drink question; but, owing to the many home and foreign issues at the elections under our misnamed democratic system, it is all but impossible to obtain a clear mandate from the electors embodying their mind and will on the subject. If, however, along with many other important *ad hoc* bodies, the people in each town or centre elected an Anti-Demoralisation Committee empowered to restrict the drink traffic to the full extent of their wishes, there cannot be a doubt that it would, in the majority of cases, greatly and increasingly curtail the hours of sale and do away with much other temptation to drunkenness and demoralisation. Year by year as the hours were reduced the sale of drink would so fall off that the public houses would, one after another, have to be closed, and no compensation question could arise.

[2] Acts xiii. 3; 1 Tim. iv. 14.

[3] The Gospels record only one mention by Christ of His visible Ecclesia by name. Significantly it refers to His divine method for preserving each community from internal divisions: an eventuality far more perilous to its life (Matt. xii. 25) than any external attack (see note, p. 8).

[4] Maclaren, *Bible Class Expositions—The Acts*, p. 73.

apostles as Christ's agents sowing great permanent *principles*, then, where a principle is manifestly embodied, apostolic practice becomes apostolic precedent to us, even in matters where only one solemn and deliberate act of administration by them is described. We may here profitably ask ourselves—Should not the slightest indication of the *Father's* will suffice for every *son*? "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God,
[1] these are sons of God."[1]

The appointment of Paul and Barnabas by the Antioch committee of prophets and teachers clearly indicates another far-reaching administrative principle of the highly rational democracy of the apostles, *viz.*, that every departmental committee in a Christian Ecclesia has plenary power in all matters and questions within its sphere; and may, for example, in the carrying out of its work, appoint men (from its own number
[2] should it deem fit) to the highest and most important duties.[2]
[3] In the case of the election of the two delegates[3] named in Acts xv. 22, it is true that *the whole Ecclesia, i.e.*, the entire body of members, was a party to the action taken; but that election was the outcome of a discussion on an emergency question outside the sphere of any departmental body. When we come

[1] Rom. viii. 14; see also John i. 12. The following are a few of the numerous New Testament *single* mentions of important things:—

"The Lord's day" under that name (Rev. i. 10).

Lord's day storing for God (1 Cor. xvi. 2).

Christ present at a large meeting of Christians (1 Cor. xv. 6).

Christ's Kingdom not to be defended by the sword (Matt. xxvi. 52).

Christ's reference by name to His visible community (Matt. xviii. 17).

Christ's reference by name to His invisible community (Matt. xvi. 18).

The reference by name to the Christian synagogue, *i.e.*, "church" or place of worship (James ii. 2).

[2] A similar course is now not at all uncommon in the business world. The Manchester Ship Canal Board, for example, years ago prevailed on one of its ablest members to relinquish his partnership in a large and important concern in order to devote his whole energies as Chairman to the commercial development of the great waterway.

[3] For additional examples of individuals elected by the constituency for other than committee work, see Acts i. 15-26; 2 Cor. viii. 18, 19.

to consider the course adopted by the apostles in dealing with such matters and questions, we shall find that it embodies a further and most important governmental principle.[1] 1

The question will doubtless ere this have occurred to the reader—If important parts of the work of the apostolic Ecclesia are to be done by independent committees, what is to prevent their overlapping each other's sphere, and in what way are they to co-ordinate their work? Any difficulties of this kind will be found to disappear on applying to the problem the great principle of representation which the apostles illustrated in such new, interesting and valuable forms. It is obvious that any questions between the committees as to their respective spheres, etc., or between individual members of the Ecclesia, could be decided by a duly elected Conciliation and Arbitration Committee; also that any official business of the Ecclesia as a body or whole, arising outside the spheres of the departmental committees, could readily and fitly be done by a Joint Board composed of the members of these committees, acting through an executive consisting of the committee chairmen.

To the further query—Is it practicable to elect so many independent committees at the same time? an affirmative reply will be found in the "Suggested Bye-Laws for a Large Ecclesia" given in detail on p. 237 *seq.*[2] 2

[1] See p. 84 *seq.*

[2] It may be mentioned that the simple system of election there described has been severely and successfully tested since 1895 in two large works, where from eight to eleven workmen's committees have been periodically and simultaneously elected on its lines by the employés: every section of opinion being proportionally represented on each committee. The following are the names of the committees, etc., as taken from the Annual Reports for the year ending 31st March, 1907:—

Sick and Accident Club and Visiting Committee.
Accidents and Injuries Prevention Committee.
Cricket Club Committee.
Picnic Committee.
Audit Committee.
Elections Committee.

Having seen that the whole Christian community acts together as a unit in the election of its departmental elders, and that each committee of these is independent in its sphere and proportionally representative of all sections or views, it remains for later chapters to show that the Ecclesia is at the same time a federation of tribes or denominations, all entirely [1] self-governing as regards their own internal affairs.[1]

When we come to investigate the causes of the melancholy "falling away," both from the spiritual and the governmental principles of the apostles, it will be necessary to examine the various New Testament references to the functions of the two most important classes of Ecclesia elders, (*a*) "evangelists" [2] (or preaching and teaching elders), (*b*) "pastors and teachers";[2] and next to consider whether the systematic co-ordination of these great spiritual agencies in every city would not, amongst other valuable results, secure the awakening of the many dormant "members of the body," whose co-operation in Christian work according to their multiform gifts is so plainly assumed in 1 Cor. xii., xiii., xiv., and indeed in all other addresses to believers.

Assuming it to have been established in the foregoing pages that an essential part of the work of the apostolic Ecclesia was done by departmental committees of elders or rulers, it is obvious that—as in the case of municipal and other large modern organisations having a variety of operations—such committees would require secretaries or other executive officers to conduct their necessary official business.

In the New Testament the word *diakonos*—variously rendered servant, minister, deacon—always signifies one who serves. It includes:—

Coal Association Committee.
Reading Room Committee.
Red Cross Committee.
Conciliation and Arbitration Committee.
Emergency Council.

[1] See p. 109 *seq.*, p. 153 *seq.*

[2] Eph. iv. 11; 1 Tim. v. 17.

(*a*) Servants of secular rulers or masters.[1] [1]

(*b*) Servants in the spiritual sense, as the apostles, indeed all Christians,[2] and even Christ Himself.[3] Here the [2 3] idea clearly seems to be that all are God's servants whether they rule or serve in the Christian community. By a like usage to-day, the British Premier, his cabinet, and other high office-bearers are frequently referred to as "public servants," and, very properly, so subscribe themselves in official documents.

(*c*) Servants of Ecclesia rulers, *i.e.*, servants in the official sense.[4] [4]

The last-named class alone concerns us here. In Rom. xvi. 1 Paul writes: "I commend unto you Phœbe our sister, who is a servant of the Ecclesia that is at Cenchreæ". She was evidently the bearer, both of his Epistle to the Romans and of the Cenchreæn Ecclesia's instructions on business of its own in Rome.

A glance at the first sentence in Paul's letter to the Philippians[5]—"Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all [5] the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons; grace to you," etc.—reminds us that Philippi was a *colonia*, virtually a detached piece of Rome, whose citizens were doubtless, as usual in such privileged Roman outposts, under high discipline and strongly influenced by *esprit de corps*. The words read indeed like a military salute, in Christ's spirit, to all ranks of the Ecclesia. They might very well be rendered: "Paul and Timothy, slaves (*douloi*) of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the rulers (*episkopoi*) and servants (*diakonoi*); grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ".

In 1 Tim. iii. we have the portrait, first of all, of the ideal spiritual ruler; embodying the standard for all the rulers of

[1] *e.g.*, Matt. xxii. 13; John ii. 5. [2] *e.g.*, Rom. xv. 8; 2 Cor. vi. 4.
[3] Luke xxii. 27. [4] *e.g.*, Phil. i. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 8-13. [5] i. 1.

an Ecclesia. Here both high character and special gift—living, teaching, leading—are clearly insisted on. It is further noticeable that the ruler's first and last qualification is high reputation. Next follow the qualifications of Ecclesia servants—deacons and deaconesses—and if (following the Revised Version precedent in Phil. iv. 8) we translate the word *semnos* by "honourable" instead of "grave," a puerile rendering which must delight all Pharisees, we perceive that, as in the case of rulers, the essentials in Ecclesia servants are that they shall be "honourable," "faithful in all things," have "a pure conscience," and be proved "blameless". There is no reference to any *teaching* gift in the case either of deacons or deaconesses, but simply the requirement that, as the rulers' faithful servants and stewards, they shall be absolutely trustworthy, and free from dishonourable and demoralising weaknesses and vices.

If the view be correct that the relation of the bishop or elder to the deacon is that of ruler to servant, it affords another clear indication that the apostolic Ecclesia, so far as its business as a whole is concerned, is planned on *civic, not ecclesiastical*, lines; most of our great administrations, municipal and other, being conducted by committees composed of rulers (*presbuteroi, episkopoi*) having secretaries or other executive officers of various kinds (*diakonoi*) as their agents and instruments.

With regard to those elders who *appear* to have been in spiritual charge of folds or detached portions of the flock, in
1 different parts of a city, like our modern pastors,[1] the record (probably for the reason which we will consider in a later
2 chapter [2]) gives us no information as to the government of these district communities. Our only clue here, in fact, is the fundamental democratic principle of the Ecclesia. But

[1] Heb. xiii. 17; Acts xx. 25, 28-30.

[2] See p. 108 *seq.*

whatever the form of administration, whether jointly by the pastor and a committee, or committees, of elders elected by the congregation or otherwise, the necessity for deacons would be as great as in the case of the departmental committees of the Ecclesia. Every church to-day needs a treasurer and a secretary; and if it be also, as it should, a hive of benevolent spiritual and other agencies, numerous other officers, as in the case of every large, well-planned, secular organisation, are required to do their business "decently and in order".[1]

[1] 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

CHAPTER VI

REFERENDUM COUNCIL AND REFERENDUM

84, The disposal of unforeseen crucial questions. Another great apostolic precedent. 85, The Antioch Ecclesia refers a vital point to the parent community. The apostles create a Referendum Council and Referendum. 89, The Jerusalem Ecclesia, the mother of many others. The Antioch community founded by Jerusalem refugees. It, in turn, originated many new Ecclesias. 91, The apostles trained the Ecclesias to stand alone, and plant new communities in "regions beyond". 92, If Ecclesias self-governing, the Nicene Council decrees invalid. 93, Another council meeting of the Jerusalem Ecclesia.

THE consummate wisdom displayed by the apostles in their treatment of the circumcision question, and the precedent which their action lays down for the guidance of all future Ecclesias, resistlessly impel the student of New Testament history to the conclusion that, throughout this controversy, they were *directly guided by the Holy Spirit.*

Probably no question in subsequent times ever cut so deeply, as did this, into the traditional prejudices and convictions of opposing parties, or so certainly threatened the disruption of a new and fast-growing community; yet at the end of the "much questioning" a *unanimous* conclusion was reached and embodied in the words "it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us," *i.e.*, the apostles and elders "with the whole Ecclesia". And in any duly constituted meeting of the members or representatives of an "Ecclesia of God" to-day, where those present are impelled by the Holy Ghost to gladly surrender their wills to the divine Will as revealed in the principles of His Word, will there not be infallible

guidance to His point of view, with the result declared by Him: "What things soever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and what things soever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven"?[1] 1

Paul and Barnabas, "sent forth by the Holy Ghost" on their great missionary campaign, had returned to Antioch "from whence they had been committed to the grace of God for the work which they had fulfilled. And when they were come, and had gathered the Ecclesia together, they rehearsed all things that God had done with them, and how that he had opened a door of faith unto the Gentiles. And they tarried no little time with the disciples. And certain men came down from Judæa and taught the brethren, saying, Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved. And when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and questioning with them, *the brethren* appointed that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question."[2] 2

Here we are at once struck with the justice and wisdom of sending "certain other" persons with Paul and Barnabas (doubtless to represent the opposite view) and of appealing —probably for two very solid reasons—to Jerusalem: (*a*) because the emissaries evidently wished to convey the false impression that they represented the Jerusalem Ecclesia;[3] 3 (*b*) because Christ directed that the preaching of the Gospel was to begin "from Jerusalem,"[4] and the apostles, His 4 agents, were still there to decide unsettled principles.

The fact that the Antioch appeal was to "the apostles and elders" at Jerusalem would clearly have justified these two bodies in jointly disposing of the question at issue. But that

[1] Matt. xviii. 18. [2] Acts xiv. 26-xv. 2.
[3] Acts xv. 24; Gal. ii. 4. [4] Luke xxiv. 47.

course would have been inconsistent with the principles of representative government, in which, as we have seen, the apostles had thus far been educating the Jerusalem community. And as regards the elders (consisting probably of evangelists [preachers and teachers], of pastors and teachers, and of departmental committee-men) they were probably
[1] largely elected for specific purposes;[1] and thus they would have acted *ultra vires* if, jointly with the apostles, they had undertaken to decide a question altogether outside their spheres. To whom, then, could a vital difference of view on the all-important matter of the conditions of salvation by Christ be properly referred? To apply the method of the Greek civic Ecclesia, *i.e.*, to summon an assembly numbering "many
[2] thousands" of members[2] to discuss a subject which excited the deepest feeling, and on the thoughtful, just, wise, pacific, nay Christlike treatment of which the future harmony and prosperity of the community depended, was obviously out of the question. What was the true course?

Although, constitutionally speaking, it was incompetent for the apostles and elders to *decide* the question at issue, they were manifestly the persons most fitted to investigate it and *submit* their conclusions thereon to the whole Ecclesia for their approval, modification or rejection. That is precisely what they did.

We read that "the apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider of this matter"; but, as we shall presently see, provisionally and *ad referendum* only. The statement in v. 12 that, after Peter's speech, "all the multitude kept silence; and they hearkened unto Barnabas and Paul rehearsing what signs and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them," indicates the presence of ordinary Ecclesia members during the discussion. We have here, then, another important apostolic precedent. The elders, of

[1] See p. 104 *seq.* [2] Acts iv. 4; xxi. 20.

whom (in addition to the apostles) the conference was composed, were *representative* rulers;[1] their proceedings must [1]
therefore be conducted, *not in private, but in presence of the whole constituency.*

In coming together to discuss the subject, they *ipso facto* became a Referendum Council which, after "much *questioning*," was addressed by Peter, Barnabas and Paul; the chairman, James, in a speech based on an important citation from the prophet Amos,[2] finally summing up the conclusion, to [2]
which all present agreed. A letter, repudiating the false teachers, declining to lay on the Gentiles any obligation whatever to fulfil the ceremonial law, but enjoining on them abstinence from certain practices (one of which was grossly immoral, and others directly calculated to wound the conscience either of the Jews or of the Gentiles), was submitted to the members; when "it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole Ecclesia," to choose delegates to carry, in company with Paul and Barnabas, the document to the Antioch Ecclesia.

How different the procedure of the so-called "Ecumenical Councils," in after ages, from the apostles' simple course in taking the elders into counsel with them as brethren throughout,[3] in getting a burning question discussed before the whole [3]
membership of the Ecclesia, and in submitting to the latter for their approval or otherwise the conclusion which had been unanimously reached![4] This course was indeed neces- [4]

[1] See p. 104 *seq.* [2] Amos ix. 11, 12.

[3] In this were they not simply imitating their divine yet "meek and lowly" Head? "For both he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the Ecclesia will I sing thy praise" (Heb. ii. 11, 12; see also John xv. 15).

[4] The record tells us that, on the arrival of Paul, Barnabas and the Antioch delegates at Jerusalem, "they were received of the Ecclesia and the apostles and the elders" (Acts xv. 4). There is evidently no hierarchy here—the Ecclesia is mentioned first, and the apostles are named between the Ecclesia and the elders as if to show their oneness both with the constituency and its rulers.

sitated both by justice and common sense, for the moral consistency and reputation of the Jerusalem Ecclesia were directly concerned. It had, moreover, the great advantage of anticipating any doubts or reflections which might be made on the validity of the decision, on the ground either (*a*) that the points involved in it concerned Christianity as a whole and thus constituted a question for *apostolic* treatment only; or (*b*) that as the apostles had planted a self-governing Ecclesia in Jerusalem, and the false teachers professed to come *from it*—*i.e.*, from the mother Ecclesia—*it* certainly was the proper authority to deal with the matter.

It is noteworthy that the Spirit-guided decision of the three bodies (apostles, elders and members) in this Antioch case was made a precedent for all the Gentile Ecclesias which had been founded by the Antioch Ecclesia's missionaries in Syria and Cilicia; precisely the same burning questions have arisen in every city where there were Jews
1 and Gentiles.[1] How sadly the delightful harmony and unity of doctrine, thus everywhere brought about, contrasts with the fearful antagonisms of the episcopal hierarchs, who ere long, throughout this very region, were to displace the apostolic organisations and lord it over "the flock of God"!

To sum up: the practical precedent, as regards government, is that the apostles virtually constitute the whole eldership of the Ecclesia into a *referendum council* to consider *urgent questions of principle and thus of policy* arising outside their several spheres; and to submit their conclusions thereon to a *referendum*, *i.e.*, to the entire membership of the community. The principle of the Swiss referendum is thus, we see, clearly

Paul's salutation to the Philippian Ecclesia likewise places the membership first—"to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (Phil. i. 1). "In honour preferring one another" (Rom. xii. 10).

[1] Acts xvi. 4. No doubt the Ecclesias of all such cities would feel themselves morally bound to adopt the apostles' and elders' conclusions.

anticipated by some 1,800 years. But, unlike the frequent Swiss references to the people, *over the heads of their representatives, of questions with which the latter, as legislators on all subjects, are elected to deal*, the apostolic reference to the constituency is only upon the extraordinary and rarely occurring questions which arise outside the spheres of all its departmental and other elders.[1] 1

The hierarchal hypothesis that the Jerusalem Ecclesia was "the metropolitan Church" and that the Antioch Ecclesia approached it in a subordinate capacity, is so entirely unsupported by the facts, or by anything we find in the New Testament as to the relations of the mother community with its many subsequently planted daughter Ecclesias, that a brief examination of the view seems necessary at this point.

The Antioch Ecclesia was founded, not by the apostles, but by some unnamed disciples—Hellenists, "men of Cyprus and Cyrene"—who, in obedience to Christ's general injunction in such cases,[2] fled from Jerusalem after the martyrdom of 2
Stephen and preached the Gospel at Antioch; not, as others did, "only to Jews" but "unto the Greeks also"; the result being that a great number of the Gentiles believed and "turned unto the Lord".[3] Barnabas, sent forth for the 3
purpose by the apostles, visited the Antioch community, and he, when he "had seen the grace of God, was glad". He greatly helped its work, first by his own efforts, afterwards by those also of Saul whom he brought to it from Tarsus; and their fruitful labours were, without doubt, materially aided by the "prophets from Jerusalem" who subsequently

[1] Peter's action (doubtless as the spokesman of the eleven) in submitting to the 120 Jerusalem Christians the recommendation to elect a person to the apostleship in Judas' stead, and the course taken later by the apostles in convening the thousands of members of the Ecclesia (Acts iv. 4) to consider and deal with their recommendation to elect a members' aid committee, seem both clear anticipations of the referendum so vividly portrayed in Acts xv.

[2] Matt. x. 23. [3] Acts xi. 21.

[1] came down to Antioch.[1] But we hear nothing whatever about either of them "laying hands on" (*epitithemi*) the elders of the Antioch Ecclesia; for "the hand of the Lord" was so manifestly with its refugee founders in their Gentile work that probably both Saul and Barnabas would have felt it to be the greatest presumption to entertain the thought. Indeed, in regard to the admission of uncircumcised Gentiles into the Ecclesia they evidently took the humble position of *learners* from these obscure but most efficient instruments of the Spirit; and it was doubtless this open-minded, expectant attitude which fitted them ere long to *receive* the laying on
[2] of hands from a committee of the Antioch Ecclesia[2] for the still mightier work of evangelising the Greek and Roman world.

It seems highly significant that, whilst we find no indication of an Evangelisation Committee in the Jerusalem Ecclesia, but very clear evidence of its leaders' cautious attitude towards the work of the free-lance evangelists in Antioch and
[3] Samaria,[3] Antioch has a body of consecrated men seemingly burdened with desire for the evangelisation of the regions
[4] beyond,[4] and who appeared to have taken very deeply to heart the lesson of the providential scattering abroad of
[5] the home-loving Jerusalem Christians.[5]

The Antioch disciples had for a whole year the benefit of Paul and Barnabas' active co-operation; they were the first followers of Christ to be called "Christians"; and their community was the first, after Jerusalem, to be
[6] mentioned in the New Testament as an Ecclesia.[6]

[1] Acts xi. 27. [2] Acts xiii. 3.

[3] Acts viii. 14; xi. 22. [4] Acts xiii. 1-3.

[5] The Spirit-prompted evangelisation of the Samaritans by the refugee Philip was clearly initiated by himself, not by the apostles; albeit the latter, through Peter and John, soon very powerfully followed it up. Immediately afterwards, the Spirit, evidently to show that "the walls of partition were one after another being thrown down," again directly moved Philip, commanding him to go southward to meet and preach the Gospel to the Ethiopian eunuch.

[6] Acts xi. 26.

It is extremely probable that the conversion of the Antioch Gentiles had begun *before* Peter's memorable visit to Cornelius, as the flight to Antioch (the apostles fearlessly *remained in Jerusalem*[1]) occurred *during* Saul's persecution of the Christians, [1]
and Peter's mission to Cæsarea *after* it.[2] Quite possibly, [2]
therefore, the Antioch Ecclesia was launched before Peter—
metaphorically opening the door of the Gentile world, as at
Pentecost he had already opened that of the Jewish world[3]— [3]
led them "that were of the circumcision" at Jerusalem[4] to [4]
formally and officially admit the Cæsarea Gentiles.[5] [5]

Be this as it may, it is clear that the Antioch Ecclesia was *founded* by the Holy Ghost as independently of Peter and the Jerusalem Ecclesia (as such) as was the apostleship of Paul. Peter, it is true, subsequently visited the Antioch Ecclesia, but certainly not to "lay hands" on it. Of this there is not the smallest indication; for God's manifest design in entrusting Paul with the gospel of the uncircumcision, whilst committing to Peter that of the circumcision, utterly precludes the supposition.[6] Indeed, the only thing recorded of Peter's visit [6]
to Antioch is that, his moral courage failing him there in presence of some Jewish Christians who "came from James," he was openly reproved by Paul for his "dissimulation".[7] So [7]
much for the alleged subordinate position of the Antioch Ecclesia.

The facts, in short, all indicate that the plan of the Spirit was to educate every Ecclesia as rapidly as possible into standing alone[8] *as a complete organism*,[9] having fraternal [8] [9]

[1] Acts viii. 1. [2] Compare Acts viii. 1-4; xi. 19 and ix. and x.
[3] Matt. xvi. 19. [4] Acts xi. 1-18.
[5] In our own day we often witness the formal stone-laying ceremony after the building is half up.
[6] Gal. ii. 7, 8, 9. [7] Gal. ii. 11-14. [8] Acts vi. 2-4.
[9] "In whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God in the Spirit" (Eph. ii. 21, 22).

relations with other Ecclesias,[1] and responsible only to God, and becoming in its turn a centre of light for the region round about;[2] thus leaving the apostles and evangelists free for further pioneer work. We read, for example, that Paul "planted, Apollos watered,"[3] and we find Titus left, as Paul's substitute in Crete, to complete his work of organisation in that island by (*inter alia*) appointing "elders in every city,"[4] or, in other words, "in every Ecclesia".[5]

There is no trace in the record of any design or effort by the apostles to consolidate the various Ecclesias into one visible organisation. Everything on the contrary points, as we have already seen,[6] to their great principle, the life and growth of each Ecclesia as an independent organism.

There is clear indication, however, that a time was contemplated when—the apostles and prophets of "the foundation"[7] being dead—inspired and undying records (the true "apostolic succession") would witness to the life, death, resurrection and ascension of the Saviour of men and to His immortal reign as the Head and King of each Ecclesia.[8]

If the view be correct that every city community was autonomous and knew no head but Christ, it results that Constantine's "Ecumenical Council" at Nicæa, and all subsequent ones claiming obligatory acceptance of their creeds and decisions were, just to that extent, opposed to the spirit and precedents of the New Testament. However orthodox or otherwise their conclusions, these councils were at the best mere voluntary gatherings of representatives of unscripturally organised and governed constituencies:[9] their joint acts and decrees having no New Testament authority whatever over the city communities, all of whom (had they realised it) remained as inalienably free to weigh them with an open mind

[1] 1 Cor. xvi. 19. [2] 1 Thess. i. 8. [3] 1 Cor. iii. 6.
[4] Tit. i. 5. [5] Acts xiv. 23. [6] P. 12 *seq.*
[7] Eph. ii. 20. [8] 2 Peter i. 15 *seq.* [9] See p. 135 *seq.*

and accept or reject them on their merits as do each of the modern cities whose delegates meet in conference on municipal questions to-day.

On this point Mosheim accurately remarks[1]:— 1

"All the churches in those primitive times were *independent* bodies, none of them subject to the jurisdiction of any other. For though the churches which were founded by the apostles themselves frequently had the honour shown them to be consulted in difficult and doubtful cases, yet they had no judicial authority, no control, no power of giving laws. On the contrary it is clear as the noonday that all Christian churches had *equal rights* and were in all respects on a footing of equality. Nor does there appear in this first century any vestige of that *consociation* of the churches of the same province which gave rise to *councils* and to *metropolitans*. Rather, as is manifest, it was not till the *second* century that the custom of holding ecclesiastical councils began, first in Greece, and thence extended into other provinces."[2] 2

Before passing from the question of the real character of the Referendum Council of each Christian community, brief reference may be made to another deeply interesting meeting of the council of the Jerusalem Ecclesia. After Paul's second great missionary campaign, and on the eve of the tumult which his mere presence in Jerusalem excited amongst the fanatical Jews, we gather from Acts xxi. 18 *seq.* that "all the elders" assembled, under the chairmanship of James, to welcome Paul and confer with him as to the measures to be taken to conciliate his deeply prejudiced countrymen and win them to the Truth. Here, as shown by v. 25, no *new* question had to be discussed and therefore submitted to the referendum, but simply what wise course could be adopted

[1] *Ecclesiastical History*, p. 35. Edition A.D. 1878.

[2] See p. 136 *seq.*

in conformity with the principles already formulated in the decision on the Antioch reference. As the result, the council strongly advised a line of action which Paul agreed to take, and which, though it led speedily to his arrest, was ultimately overruled for highest good.

CHAPTER VII

THE DOCTRINE OF "THE LAYING ON OF HANDS"

95, Preliminary remarks. 96, The neglect of Christians to study this and kindred subjects; the calamitous consequences. The Scripture symbolism of the laying on of hands. Indicates the transfer of guilt. Expresses the divine favour. Tells of the healing of disease. Also of the imparting of Holy Ghost power to prophesy and speak with tongues. 97, Apostles alone could confer miracle-working power. The laying on of hands on appointment to office. 98, The function of the apostles as founders intransmissible. They formed no caste which could perpetuate itself. 99, "Elder" a generic term comprising three classes of overseers. 100, The election and appointment of the evangelist. 101, The New Testament precedents on the subject. 103, The election and appointment of the home evangelist or preaching and teaching elder. 104, The passages cited in "ordination" discussions. 106, The first Levitical teachers were appointed by "the people". 107, The appointment of the New Testament "pastor and teacher" a blank. 109, The federal and the tribal spheres. 110, A disconcerting phase of the "appointment" question. The apostles left no directions about appointing *new* officers. 111, But their governmental *principles* plainly indicate our course. All Ecclesias and their denominations free to appoint elders as they deem best. Each therefore should honour all orderly appointment by its fellows. 112, The marplot. Great anti-Christian hierarchies. 113, A more excellent way. 114, The true object of appointment. 115, Christ did not "lay hands" on His apostles. 116, What did His symbols mean? Their letter killeth, their spirit giveth life. 118, Did Christ endue His witnesses with inerrancy?

THUS far, our study of the divinely planned organisation has revealed to us a succession of wondrously just, wise, strong, unifying principles, reminding us again and again of Paul's words: "God is not a God of confusion, but of peace; as in all the Ecclesias of the saints. . . . Let all things be done decently and in order."[1] 1

[1] 1 Cor. xiv. 33, 40.

But a portentous change of scene awaits us. We must now turn our eyes to the genesis of a cloud on the horizon of Christ's Kingdom which, at the first, "no bigger than a man's hand," grew, in the generations following the apostolic age, till it ultimately covered the heavens, and, for many centuries, all but eclipsed the light of Christianity itself.

The Satanic perversion of the doctrine of the "laying on of hands," in order, everywhere, to create a caste of "priests" blasphemously displacing Christ, by declaring in effect "No
1 one cometh unto the Father, but by me," [1] makes it imperative now to examine that doctrine, in so far, at least, as it bears on the real character of the apostolic organisation.

The history of Christ's cause clearly shows that the neglect, by generations of His professed followers, to "search the scriptures" on this and kindred subjects for themselves, led directly to the gigantic delusion of "apostolic succession
2 through the laying on of episcopal hands" [2] and to the rise and growth of the sacerdotal caste which, by filching away the spiritual liberties, the morale, and thus the sense of responsibility and power for good, of vast numbers of Christians, probably did more to destroy the apostolic Ecclesia than all
3 other causes combined.[3]

Numerous passages, in both Old and New Testaments, make it clear that the ceremony of "the laying on of hands" was employed to symbolise outwardly or express some inward and invisible act or truth. For example, there was a laying on of hands:—

[1] John xiv. 6.

[2] Apostolic succession is defined in a leading modern dictionary (*The Century*) as "an uninterrupted succession of bishops, and through them of priests and deacons (these three orders of ministers being called the *apostolic orders*), in the Church, by regular ordination from the first apostles down to the present day, maintained by the Roman Catholic, Greek, Oriental, and Anglican Churches to be historical and to be essential to the transmission of valid orders".

[3] "For freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage" (Gal. v. 1).

(*a*) To indicate the transfer of guilt from the sinner to the innocent animal to be sacrificed.[1]

(*b*) To express the divine love and favour.[2]

(*c*) To draw attention to the miraculous healing of disease.[3] (That this was its express object in many cases is probable from the fact that Christ and the apostles often healed miraculously without any laying on of hands.[4])

(*d*) To tell the recipient, and others beholding, that Holy Ghost power to prophesy and speak with tongues was being conveyed.[5] (Only the apostles would appear to have been empowered to confer this gift; Philip the evangelist, though himself working "signs and great miracles" and instrumental in leading many to Christ, evidently had not the gift of imparting his miracle-working power.[6])

We come now to that laying on of hands by which, in certain cases in both Old and New Testament times, office was outwardly and solemnly conferred,[7] but on the perversion of which simple act, the huge imposture of "apostolic succession" has since been built by ages of humanly instituted priests and prelates. On scripturally testing this blighting heresy we at once encounter some very significant facts; but before entering upon the questions—What did the act originally mean? On whom were hands laid? Who laid hands upon them? it may be well to clear the ground by recalling a few fundamental facts.

[1] Exod. xxix. 15; Lev. i. 3; xvi. 9, 10. [2] Matt. xix. 15.

[3] Mark vi. 5, 6; xvi. 18; Luke iv. 40; Acts xxviii. 8.

[4] John iv. 49-53; Acts v. 15, 16.

[5] See Acts viii. 17 *seq.*; xix. 6. But when "the Holy Ghost fell" on Cornelius and his relatives and intimate friends (the fact being demonstrated by their speaking with tongues and magnifying God), there was no previous laying on of hands. Why? Was it not because in this signal instance it was necessary to show that the enduement was God's direct act? Peter, although God's instrument, was really a spectator of the *divine* opening of the door of the Kingdom to the Gentiles. *That* accomplished, "he commanded them to be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts x. 24, 44-48).

[6] Compare Acts viii. 5-13 with 15-17. [7] Num. xxvii. 18; Acts vi. 6,

In the Revelation the apostles are described as the "foundations" of the wall of the New Jerusalem. In their capacity as organisers of "the Ecclesia of God," they could, obviously, have no "successors".

Further, in common with the New Testament prophets, they had the unique, because strictly initial and temporary, function of declaring "the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets [1] in the Spirit".[1] That is to say, through them as oracles, in an age when as yet there were no Gospels or epistles, the mind of God was miraculously revealed on many mysterious but profoundly important spiritual questions. Afterwards when, in the ordinary course of nature, the apostles and prophets were removed by death (the power to work miracles, prophesy and speak with tongues, ceasing with them), Christ "the head of the Ecclesia" provided as their successors (*a*) "evangelists," (*b*) "pastors and teachers," (*c*) the inspired [2] record of Himself, "the Word of God,"[2] as the immutable basis of their preaching and teaching. And so we read: "And he gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, [3] unto the building up of the body of Christ".[3]

In the New Testament not only is there no trace of provision for an "uninterrupted succession of bishops" with continuous ("bishop," "priest" and "deacon") "ordaining" powers; it contains no hint or suggestion of any caste, class or order empowered, by "laying on of hands" or otherwise, *to perpetuate itself*. In every act of appointment in the Ecclesia there is, so to speak, "a break of gauge": the evangelist founding the community appoints, not an evangelist, but an elected evangelisation, poor relief or other depart-

[1] Eph. iii. 4, 5. [2] John i. 1. [3] Eph. iv. 11, 12.

mental committee; and the evangelisation committee in turn appoints evangelists, not committees.

Here, to avoid confusion of ideas, it is necessary to anticipate one or two conclusions of later pages with regard to the officers of the Christian organisation.

"Elder" (*presbuteros*) is, in New Testament usage, a generic word synonymous with overseer (*episkopos*)[1] and signifies one having oversight in an Ecclesia, whether as evangelist (preacher), as pastor and teacher, as member of a departmental committee, or, probably, as overseer or ruler in any other capacity.[2]

"Evangelists," away from the mission field and labouring (as preachers) in an Ecclesia sphere, are referred to as "elders".[3] "Pastors and teachers" are similarly designated elders.[4] And so likewise are departmental committee members.[5] Obviously the "gift" for the particular office was a divine endowment, the office itself being in each case conferred by man. We find apostles acting in two of these, and others in all three, capacities.

Peter and John went afield as evangelists, *i.e.*, as preachers of "the Word";[6] they evidently also (probably when back at their Jerusalem base) worked as teaching "elders".[7] Paul likewise did preaching and teaching and pastoral work (at Antioch,[8] Ephesus[9] and many other places); so, too, did Barnabas[10] and also Timothy and Titus, as Paul's epistles to them clearly show. Other examples in point are Stephen and Philip—both apparently being devoted preachers and teachers.[11] Paul and Barnabas were, we remember, on the Antioch evangelisation committee, and Stephen and Philip

[1] See p. 126 *seq.*
[2] 1 Tim. iii. 1, 5; v. 17.
[3] Eph. iv. 11, 12; 1 Tim. v. 17.
[4] Tit. i. 5, 9; 1 Peter v. 1-4.
[5] Compare Acts vi. 1-6 with xi. 30.
[6] Acts viii. 25.
[7] 1 Peter v. 1; 2 John i. 1.
[8] Acts xi. 26; xv. 35.
[9] Acts xx. 31.
[10] Acts xi. 22-26.
[11] Acts vii. 2 *seq.*; viii. 5, 35.

formed part of the committee for the relief of the Jerusalem
[1] Ecclesia's poor.[1]

Turning now to the crucial question of the election and appointment, under apostolic practice and precedent, of the most fruitful and Christlike of all Christian workers, the evangelist or preacher and teacher, we note first that the Revised Version strikes out the Authorised Version word "ordain" and replaces it by "appoint" in each of the four
[2] instances[2] where it thus characterises the conferment of
[3] office *by man*[3]; and further, that there is no evidence that the apostles ever "laid hands" (*epitithemi*) on, or indeed in any other way appointed, an evangelist to particular or general service in that capacity.

The indications clearly are that each new community's first act was to elect elders. In Chapter V. we saw that the committees were elected directly by the constituency and then appointed by the evangelist or missionary; further, that they had complete control of their respective spheres. The Evangelisation Committee, for example, chose and appointed evangelists to go forth to preach the Gospel to regions beyond, and, in due course, to launch each new Ecclesia formed by them as a self-governing organism fully competent, through its appropriate departments, to choose and appoint its own missionaries (*i.e.*, evangelists) and other agents.

Viewing as a whole the apostolic plan for handing on the Ecclesia organisation and everywhere reproducing Christian communities, we cannot but be struck with its non-ecclesiastical character. Had every "Ecclesia of God" in this simple way become the progenitor of others, might not the whole world have been evangelised in a few hundred years?

[1] Acts xiii. 1-3; vi. 5.
[2] *Cheirotoneō* (Acts xiv. 23); *kathistēmi* (Tit. i. 5; Heb. v. 1; viii. 3).
[3] See p. 104 *seq.*

There appear to be two clear examples in the New Testament of the election and appointment of the evangelist or missionary by a departmental body: the one already cited of the apostles Paul and Barnabas,[1] and that of Timothy.

Paul's words to Timothy: "For the which cause I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee through the laying on of my hands,"[2] must refer either (*a*) to a manual act of Paul at Timothy's conversion and confession of his faith in Christ, in which case it must mean a laying on of hands to tell of the conferring of Holy Ghost power to speak with tongues,[3] there being no instance of the apostles laying hands on new converts apart from such enduement with power,[4] or, much more probably (*b*), to

[1] See p. 58 *seq.* [2] 2 Tim. i. 6.

[3] Acts viii. 15-18 and specially 18; xix. 6.

[4] The oft-cited words of Heb. vi. 1, 2, "not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the teaching of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment," cannot refer to the "confirmation" of catechumens. Nowhere else in the New Testament is there the slightest allusion to any act or ceremony of the kind. It would moreover be most presumptuous—after a believer had received at the hand of God the baptism of the Holy Ghost (outwardly represented by literal baptism) and, with it, all the privileges resulting from his death to sin, and resurrection to eternal life in Christ (Rom. viii. 3-11)—to assume that this was insufficient, and that he could be admitted to full communion with the Ecclesia only through the laying on of episcopal hands!

The words "laying on of hands" here in all probability point to the visible Ecclesia and its office-conferring power, organisation and discipline as "the body of Christ" (1 Cor. xii. 27; Phil. i. 1; Heb. xiii. 17). It is the only reference to the Christian community in the passage, which would thus, without it, have been an incomplete summary of the Christian life, for the word "baptisms"—the inner and the outer baptisms above referred to—has no necessary connection with the Ecclesia, many persons having been baptised into Christ quite apart from any community (*e.g.*, Acts viii. 38; ix. 18; x. 48).

The thought seems to be that, just as the believer's outward baptism symbolises the inward death to sin and resurrection with Christ (Rom. vi. 1-11) wrought in him by the baptism of the Spirit; so, in the Ecclesia, which the believer joins as a member of "the body of Christ," the outward "laying on of hands," received by its newly elected elders, represents the inward conferment, by the Spirit, of the *charisma* or gift which qualifies them for rule (1 Cor. xii. 8 *seq.*).

Paul's appointment of Timothy as one of a body or committee
1 of elders on the formation of a new Ecclesia.[1]

As we know that the members of the Jerusalem Ecclesia elected a committee to minister to the physical needs of
2 their poorer brethren,[2] and that such committee was then appointed to office by the apostles, we may take it as certain that the body of elders whose much higher province it subsequently was to set apart Timothy as a missionary was likewise elected by the members of its Ecclesia and appointed to office by Paul. And, as the context of Paul's exhortation to "stir up" (Greek—*stir into flame*) "the gift of God" seems to point to a spiritual gift, we are impelled to conclude that he received, or developed, or realised for the first time his original endowment with this *charisma* or divine inspira-
3 tion[3] on such appointment to the eldership by Paul.

Afterwards his committee, we infer, appointed him as
4 evangelist or missionary at Paul's suggestion,[4] and so Paul
5 subsequently enjoins him as a fellow-worker:[5] "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy
6 with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery".[6] Thus we see he received, at the hand of God, a second *charisma* when his presbytery appointed him to the highest and noblest of all work—that of the Christian missionary. Although the

"Canon Henson shows that the Anglican Church Fathers looked upon confirmation simply as a public personal profession corresponding to Nonconformists joining the Church. He argues, therefore, that mutual recognition of Church membership should be arranged between the Anglican and other Protestant Churches; and so the standing injury to Christian charity of refusing the fellowship of the communion to brother-Christians be done away with" ("Cloughmaesimon" in *The Christian Irishman*, April, 1907).

[1] Supposition (*a*) seems most unlikely. Timothy could hardly *stir up* a gift of speaking with tongues!

[2] Acts vi. 1-6. [3] Rom. xv. 18, 19.

[4] Acts xvi. 1-5. Shortly before this, the Antioch Ecclesia (probably through an appropriate committee) had similarly confirmed Paul's choice of Silas as his coadjutor in place of Barnabas (Acts xv. 40).

[5] Rom. xvi. 21. [6] 1 Tim. iv. 14. See p. 58 *seq.*

presbytery laid hands on Timothy, the solemn charge to him as evangelist would no doubt be delivered by Paul.[1] [1]

Later, in fact on the eve of his martyrdom, Paul enjoins, nay adjures, Timothy in the most earnest and solemn language to preach and teach "the Word"; and then, summing up, directs him to "do the work of an evangelist"; to "fulfil" his "ministry".[2] [2]

Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus, though often rightly referred to to-day as "pastoral epistles," are much more than that. They are beyond question letters to missionaries,[3] [3] directing them, as organisers of the world's greatest institution, "the Ecclesia of God"; and bringing home to them, as evangelists (preachers and teachers), founders and builders up of new communities, the high responsibilities of their office. For example, 1 Tim. iii. 1-7 describes the qualifications of the elders whom the members of the new Ecclesias are to elect;[4] [4] and 1 Tim. v. 22 warns the missionary himself against hasty and impulsive action in laying hands on men whose character and fitness for the work have not first been most carefully and deliberately weighed.

We pass now to the question of the appointment of the evangelist labouring as a preaching elder[5] *in an Ecclesia sphere.* [5] Here, as there is not an unquestionable instance of the choice

[1] 2 Tim. ii. 2, 14; iv. 1; 1 Tim. i. 18. See also the whole tenor of both epistles.

[2] 2 Tim. iv. 1-6. Christ's immortal direction to the apostles, as *evangelists*, beyond question invests them with the double function: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20).

[3] 2 Tim. iv. 5. [4] Acts xiv. 23; Tit. i. v.

[5] The wording of Paul's injunction in 1 Tim. v. 17 should be carefully noted: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially those who labour in the word and in" (not *or in*) "teaching".

or appointment either of the home evangelist or of the pastor and teacher, we are left wholly to analogy and conjecture.

Let us carefully examine the two passages referring to elders which are so often cited in connection with what is termed ministerial "ordination":—

"And when they had appointed for them elders in every
[1] ecclesia".[1] Here the Greek verb (*cheirotoneō*), as Dean Alford shows, means "*appointed by suffrage:* and probably, by the
[2] analogy of Acts vi. 2-6 (see 2 Cor. viii. 19[2]), the strict meaning is here to be retained. The word will not bear Jerome's and Chrysostom's sense of '*laying on* of hands,' adopted by Roman Catholic expositors. Nor is there any reason here for departing from the usual meaning of electing by show of hands. The apostles may have admitted by ordination those *presbyters*
[3] *whom the churches elected.*"[3]

The other passage reads:—

[4] "Appoint elders in every city".[4] The Greek verb here is
[5] not the specific one *epitithemi*,[5] but the generic one *kathistemi*, which, in the Revised Version, is variously translated appoint, set, conduct, make. In nineteen of its twenty New Testament uses the word has no necessary connection with appointment by *laying on of hands;* and in not one of the twenty does
[6] the Revised Version render it "ordain".[6]

It will be observed both passages are so worded that "elders" may mean either *some* or *all* of the elders.

So far then we have nothing *certain* about the appointment of elders other than the departmental ones.

[1] Acts xiv. 23.

[2] Here the same verb (*cheirotoneō*) is employed as in Acts xiv. 23.

[3] Alford's *New Testament for English Readers*—Acts xiv. 23. Alford's rendering of the passage is, "When they had elected them elders".

[4] Tit. i. 5. [5] See p. 100.

[6] In eleven instances the Authorised Version renders one or other of the following eight Greek verbs—*kathistēmi*, *poieō*, *tithemi*, *ginomai*, *cheirotoneō*, *proetoimazō*, *kataskeuazō*, *pro-graphō*—"ordain," but in each case the Revised Version discards the word.

Paul's caution to Timothy to "lay hands hastily on no man"[1] carries us no farther in our investigation. It may refer simply to the elders upon whom we know hands *were* laid by the apostles (as missionaries), *i.e.*, those forming the elected departmental bodies. All three passages, in short, seem consistent with either of two views:—

[1] 1 Tim. v. 22.

VIEW I.

(*a*) That the most important departmental committees—such as the Members' Aid Committee of Jerusalem and the Evangelisation Committee of Antioch—were formed as soon as possible after a new Ecclesia was launched.

(*b*) That the work, not only of missionary evangelists in regions beyond but also of elders labouring "in the Word"[2] in an Ecclesia sphere, was to be promoted by an Evangelisation Committee.

[2] 1 Tim. v. 17.

(*c*) That "the flock of God"[3] had local folds or assemblies meeting, for convenience like our modern churches, in various districts of the city area (many of them doubtless formed years after the missionaries were gone).

[3] 1 Peter v. 2.

(*d*) That the folds were free to elect and appoint their pastoral and teaching elders and other officers as they deemed fit.

(*e*) That Paul's direction to Titus to appoint or set or conduct or make "elders in every city" simply means that he was to lead the members of each Ecclesia to jointly elect the required departmental committees, and to promote the formation of local folds with their necessary officers and organisation.

VIEW II.

That View I. should be modified as follows:—

That evangelists for the *foreign* field only were selected and appointed by a committee: the election and appointment, both of the home evangelists (or preaching elders) and of

the pastoral and teaching elders, being entrusted to the local folds.

Thus, according to View I., the home evangelists or preaching elders would be chosen and appointed by the Evangelisation Committee, whilst View II. assumes they would be elected and appointed by the local folds.

If we go back far enough we may glean an interesting thought about the men whose most important function made them, we might say, the ancestors of the Christian pastor and teacher. All evangelical Christians are agreed that the sacrificing priests and the high priest were done away with in Christ, the "great high priest" and "Lamb of God"; His office being (as the alternative rendering of the Revised
[1] Version has it) "a priesthood that doth not pass to another".[1] But the record tells us that the various branches of the descendants of Levi who supplied the Levites, as distinguished from the one Aaronic branch which furnished the sacrificing priests, were, under divine direction, "given" by the people "to do the service of the Lord" in "the tent of meeting," in place of "all the firstborn among the children of Israel," whom He had previously claimed at the first
[2] passover.[2]

We further learn that the Levites were purposely spread throughout the land that they might, in addition to their duties at headquarters in the tent of meeting or temple, be-
[3] come *the spiritual teachers of the nation;*[3] also that, on their original appointment, they were consecrated to God, not by
[4] priestly hands but by the laying on of *the hands of the people.*[4]

[1] Heb. vii. 24. [2] Num. viii. 17.

[3] Num. xxxv. 1-8; Josh. xxi.; Deut. xxxiii. 10; 2 Chron. xxxv. 3; Neh. viii. 7, 8, 9. They were released from the physical service of the tent of meeting when fifty years old (Num. viii. 23-26), the age when a ripe spiritual experience and larger knowledge, both of God and their fellow-men, would make them most "apt to teach".

[4] Num. viii. 10 *seq.*; iii. 40-51.

In a singularly powerful passage, Lightfoot, in *The Christian Ministry* (pp. 182-83),[1] maintains that this solemn act symbolised the *temporary* transfer by "the people" to the Levites of their functions as a "kingdom of priests";[2] and that, under the New Covenant, the provisionally deputed functions were resumed by the "royal priesthood"[3] of Christian believers. Nevertheless, although the ceremonial priest disappeared for ever when Christ "offered up Himself," the *teaching* function of the Levite was continued by the Christian pastor and teacher (whose appointment to office was, however, obviously not to be once for all, and then transmitted *by descent*, as in the Levite's case).

We are not told *how* "the children of Israel" laid "their hands upon the Levites".[4] But the simple fact, if it is to be taken as a precedent in the appointment of the Levites' spiritual descendants—Christian pastors and teachers—clearly implies and exhibits the equality and fraternity enjoined by Christ on the founders of His community.[5] If only these great *principles* are embodied in organisation, it need not concern us if the New Testament is wholly silent otherwise about the appointment of the pastor and teacher.

[1] "Yet the sacerdotal system of the Old Testament possessed one important characteristic, which separated it from heathen priesthoods and which deserves especial notice. The priestly tribe held this peculiar relation to God only as the 'representatives' of the whole nation. As 'delegates' of the people they offered sacrifice and made atonement. The whole community is regarded as a 'kingdom of priests,' 'a holy nation'. The Levites are, so to speak, ordained by the whole congregation. 'The children of Israel,' it is said, 'shall put their hands upon the Levites' (Num. viii. 10). The nation thus deputes to a single tribe the priestly functions which belong properly to itself as a whole. The Christian idea therefore was the restitution of this immediate and direct relation with God. . . . The period of childhood was passed, and the Church of God was now arrived at mature age. The covenant people resumed their sacerdotal functions."

[2] Exod. xix. 6.

[3] 1 Peter ii. 9.

[4] They doubtless did so through the medium of the "elders," as in Lev. iv. 13-21.

[5] Matt. xxiii. 8-12.

As regards the *function* of "pastors and teachers" we have very clear guidance. Had they been termed "pastors" *only*, that might have suggested simply superiority of position, as shepherds over sheep, the idea of spiritual oversight alone, which would have led to "lording it over the charge allotted
1 to" them;[1] so they are plainly told that they are "pastors
2 *and teachers*".[2] The term "pastor" (*poimēn*, a shepherd) appears only once in the New Testament in connection with the Christian organisation; "teacher" (*didaskalos*), however, occurs eleven times.

Pastors and teachers seem to be specially alluded to in Heb. xiii. 17: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit to them: for they watch in behalf of your souls, as they that shall give account; that they may do this with joy, and not with grief: for this were unprofitable for you". Here, it will be observed, the attitude enjoined is towards faithful and loving watchmen of souls.

We know that eldership is repeatedly identified with the
3 spiritual feeding and tending of the flock.[3] The very name of the office, "pastor" or shepherd, considered in conjunction
4 with that of Christ, "the chief Shepherd"[4]—"the Head" not only of the Ecclesia Universal but also of every Ecclesia Local—seems to point to persons in charge of sections or folds of the flock and thus to eldership over them.

Outside the plain and definite references to *function*, however, we grope helplessly for light on many far-reaching questions concerning "pastors and teachers". There is not the smallest indication whether they were chosen and appointed by the entire flock, *i.e.*, by the whole membership of the Ecclesia; or (like the evangelists) by a special departmental committee; or, individually, by detached portions of the flock

[1] 1 Peter v. 3. [2] Eph. iv. 11.

[3] Acts xx. 28-31; 1 Tim. iii. 2; v. 17; Tit. i. 5, 9; John xxi. 15-17; 1 Peter v. 1-3.

[4] 1 Peter v. 4.

meeting locally, as folds, in various parts of the city; or, in the latter case, whether and in what way they were associated with other elders over the fold in local organisation and work essential to its growth and prosperity.

In short, the hiatus in the record with regard to the pastor's sphere, election, appointment, etc., seems so remarkable and manifestly designed, that it is morally certain it must have a satisfactory explanation.

If we recall our conclusions as to the relation between the Christian Ecclesia and the Christian synagogue,[1] and consider the question in the light of the Ecclesia's tribal character prefigured at its foundation[2] and duly manifested afterwards in "the fulness of the time," we may be led to realise that, whilst there are certain great and essential parts of the work of each Christian community which are designed to be done by it *as a whole*, there are certain other parts—and pre-eminently pastoral organisation and work—in which (as in the case of the internal rule of the patriarchal tribes—"Dan shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel," Gen. xlix. 16) every denomination seems to be given *carte blanche* to develop on its own tribal lines: each of them being left with a free hand as regards both the pastors and other officers of the "synagogues"[3] to which they may be attached.[4]

The underlying principle of true federalism seems here to be clearly embodied, *viz.*, that things which are better done *jointly* than severally are done by the organisation as a unit; and, conversely, those best done *severally* are done independently by each of the constituent tribes or denominations. Obviously, mutual agreement between the denominations and

[1] See p. 37 *seq.* [2] See p. 153 *seq.* [3] James ii. 2.

[4] Every Christian governmental system is, however, obviously assumed to be based on the great fundamental principles laid down by Christ (Matt. xxiii. 8-12). And since the greater includes the less, it follows that the election (federally or tribally) of the elders of an Ecclesia by its members carries with it the members' ultimate control of all the arrangements which their elders make.

the Ecclesia members as a whole would from time to time decide into which category any new branch of effort should fall.

So far, however, as the two oldest and immeasurably most important of all the agencies of "the Ecclesia of God" are concerned, (*a*) evangelisation and (*b*) pastoral and teaching work, the maximum of spiritual results would, in the writer's view, be obtained by placing the former within the federal and the latter within the tribal sphere; evangelisation being promoted *jointly* by an interdenominational committee, and pastoral and teaching work *severally* by the various folds or [1] denominations of the flock.[1]

In preceding pages we have dealt with the formal conferment of office *when a new Ecclesia was being organised.*

But there is another and, at first sight, somewhat startling phase of the "appointment" question which arises out of *the subsequent life of the apostolic community.* It illustrates how even the most definite New Testament precedents fail us if, slavishly following their letter, we ignore the *principles* they embody. It points us to a large province in administration where we are purposely thrown on our own resources that we may "prove all things" and "hold fast that which is good". It reveals the designed liberty and variety in non-essentials which to-day so markedly characterise and differentiate the Christian denominations. Last not least, it brings home to us the complete baselessness of the sacerdotal claim to "apostolic succession" through the laying on of "bishops' hands".

The constituency of a new Ecclesia elects its departmental committees. These are duly appointed by its missionary

[1] As "the work of an evangelist" is in itself wholly undenominational, probably nothing could more certainly secure Christian union and solidarity in each city than to have a body of able and devoted "preachers and teachers" evangelising in turn all the church districts in the Ecclesia sphere. In the nature of things evangelisation work implies "going about" as in Paul's case (Acts xx. 25), whilst the work of the pastor and teacher necessarily involves sedentary effort, attention to a particular fold.

founders. The time arrives when—the young community having become strong enough to stand alone—the missionaries depart for regions beyond.

A few years pass during which (*a*) several members of the committees have died and their places have been filled by other men, (*b*) new departmental enterprises have been initiated and corresponding new committees elected, (*c*) new local folds or district congregations have been planted and supplied with their needed leaders.

But—the missionaries having left no directions whatever about the appointment of *new* office holders—the important question has arisen—Who is to induct them into their several posts?

The departmental committees would find themselves in no difficulty. They would doubtless conclude that, since no instructions were given about the appointment of new colleagues, their own original appointment must have been meant simply to evidence the solemn *foundation* of the committee organisation by the apostles, and therefore that in the case of new committee-men all that was necessary was their due *election* by the constituency. Accordingly, the original committee-men, bowing to the will of the electorate, would gracefully give place to the new members, just as do all retiring committees of Christian gentlemen to-day.

As regards *wholly new* committees, these, in the entire absence of direction, would perceive that they were intended to have a free hand in the matter of their appointment, and would probably arrange for their induction by some leading representative person.

New pastors and teachers would be chosen and appointed under the various arrangements made by the several local folds or other sections of the flock.

New preaching elders (home evangelists) would be chosen and appointed, either like the pastors and teachers or (much more probably) by an evangelisation committee.

Whichever courses were taken, the practical moral for us clearly is:—

(1) That each self-governing Ecclesia and its denominations have respectively all the liberty secured to them by the fundamental principles of the institution, to make any arrangements they may deem most suitable for appointing their departmental, their preaching and teaching, their pastoral and teaching, and other elders.

(2) That the various tribes of the spiritual Israel are, as equal members of a divinely planned federation, morally bound to respect and honour all decent and orderly appointment by their fellow denominations.

Winging our way from New Testament times across the long centuries of departure from apostolic governmental principles, we would say: If our Anglican, Baptist, Congregational, Methodist, Presbyterian and other "folds" of the flock would be content to justify their several systems *as denominations only*, no one could join issue with them; for every tribe is free to adopt whatever *church* polity gives it most comfort and satisfaction.

But when it is maintained that episcopacy is *the apostolic succession* and that no Free Church minister has "valid orders" because he has not been *episcopally* "ordained," we reject the "imposition" as destitute of Scriptural basis.

In past pages we have seen that the only New Testament passages bearing on appointment give no support whatever to the hypothesis of "ordination" from generation to generation through a given order, class or caste. In our next chapter Episcopalians of the front rank will be quoted to prove that no rootlet of the episcopal tree can be traced down to apostolic times.

Nevertheless, for ages three huge human hierarchies, each claiming apostolical succession and all treating non-conforming Christians as schismatics, have "laid hands" on bishops, "priests," deacons and catechumens, without the smallest reference to the voice or vote of the apostolic community or

of any committee elected by it. Where they obtain a scintilla of Scriptural sanction for their pretensions to autocratic authority it is for their apologists to show.[1] [1]

Let us thank Him who—knowing that grasping and ambitious men would arise in His community, not only to lord it over their fellows but actually to displace Himself—left the pastor and teacher without ecclesiastical lineage[2] that He [2] might be shut up to the varied but valid appointment devised by the different spiritual tribes or denominations.

We repeat: If each denomination *as such* simply required respect for its man-made arrangements, whilst itself honouring the different methods adopted by the other Christian tribes, the claim would be conceded gladly and without reserve. Thereby the one great obstacle to Christian union would be removed; and, instead of hindering, we would hasten the fulfilment of the Redeemer's prayer "that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me". The brotherly spirit towards each other now prevailing

[1] How fearful is the responsibility of the oldest of these, the Greek Church, for the moral, social and political condition of the Russian people; and also—in the murderous feud between its "exarchate" and "patriarchate" sections—for the prolonged "fire and sword" desolation of Macedonia! In presence of these things, and of the widespread ignorance and superstition characterising the populations of Eastern Europe ministered to by the Greek Church—of the fact also that that Church, *after receiving a pure Gospel in the early centuries, has (in common with the Latin Church) for ages virtually buried it under the rubbish of a dead externalism*—how misleading, unworthy of him, are the following sacerdotalist remarks by Dr. Whyte, minister of "the premier Presbyterian Church in Scotland" and Moderator (1898) of the Free Church General Assembly:—

"The first step to a real union of Christendom will be taken when we come to admit and to realise that the Greek Church was the original Mother of us all; that the Latin Church was her first child; and that, through both those Churches, we ourselves have our religious existence; through them we have the universal foundations of our Creeds and Confessions and Catechisms; our public worship also; our Christian character and our Christian civilisation; and everything indeed that is essential to our salvation" (*British Weekly*, p. 238, 14th June, 1906).

[2] Other than that of the Levitical teachers (see p. 107).

amongst the Free Church denominations—the result mainly of the commendable efforts of the Free Church federation —should impel their members to study the question of tribal federation with unbiassed minds. Years ago sporadic but weighty attempts were made in the Congregational (and more recently in the Baptist) denomination to induce their members to federate their respective churches in each city sphere. The movement has not progressed as could be desired, but it would probably receive an enormous impetus if it were advocated as a preliminary to federal union of all the Christian denominations of the city as an apostolic Ecclesia.

Which denomination will be the first to propose this? *Two* agreeing to do so on the lines of Matt. xviii. 19, 20 would without doubt secure the result promised by our divine Head for agreement on a much smaller scale.

Whilst all must admit that the solemn, orderly appointment of individuals and committees is every way fitting and desirable to effect its manifest purpose, *i.e.*, to signalise the conferment and bring home to appointees their responsibility to God for the faithful exercise of the gifts which have brought office upon them, we will presently see that it is in itself a mere symbol, void of inherent virtue and efficacy, which the Holy Ghost uses or disuses at His pleasure, in order that we may distinguish between substance and shadow, and perceive that "neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircum-
1 cision, but a new creature".[1]

The *intrinsic* nothingness of appointment is finely illustrated in 1 Kings xix. 20. Elijah had cast his mantle upon Elisha, but the latter, responding in words which *seemed* an excuse for not following him at once, was immediately answered by Elijah: "Go back again; for what have I done to thee?" obviously meaning—"I have not made thee a prophet if thou wert not one in heart already". After Christ's appointment

[1] Gal. vi. 15.

of Judas as an apostle was he not still an unchanged "son of perdition"?[1]

Doubtless the true conception of the place and value of outward symbols generally was in Paul's mind when he wrote: "I thank God that I baptised none of you, save Crispus and Gaius . . . for Christ sent me not to baptise, but to preach the gospel".[2]

There is not the smallest indication in the record that when Christ appointed His twelve apostles He either laid hands on them or employed any other outward symbol to manifest the fact.[3] Similarly no hands were laid on Judas' successor, Matthias,[4] nor upon Paul.[5] Was this to show that they were an order of men "not made with hands"[6] but by Christ *as God?* Clearly their qualification as His "witnesses,"[7] persons who had seen the Lord,[8] could not be transmitted to *successors*.

When He appeared miraculously to "the disciples" after His resurrection and communed with them, we read that He "said to them again, Peace *be* unto you: as the Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whose soever *sins* ye retain, they are retained."[9]

That this could not have been, as some maintain, a formal conferment of the apostleship seems clear from the oft-noticed circumstance that Thomas was absent on the occasion, to say nothing of the fact that the apostles had been duly appointed long before.[10] Moreover, besides the ten apostles

[1] "He appointed twelve" (Mark iii. 14).
[2] 1 Cor. i. 14, 17.
[3] Matt. x. 1-5; Mark iii. 14-19; Luke vi. 12-16.
[4] Acts i. 15-26.
[5] Ananias laid hands on him, not to appoint him to apostleship, but "that he might receive his sight" (Acts ix. 12. See also Gal. i. 1).
[6] 2 Cor. v. 1.
[7] Luke xxiv. 48; Acts i. 8.
[8] 1 Cor. ix. 1.
[9] John xx. 21-23.
[10] Mark iii. 14; John xv. 16.

present, there were other "disciples" in the room, in addition to the two who had been joined by Christ on their way to [1] Emmaus.[1]

But even had His purpose in the act been the formal appointment of His agents, it is certain He did not "lay hands" upon them, but, as we have seen, employed quite a different symbol. He was about to be parted from His chosen witnesses, and they would see Him no more in the flesh. He breathed on them (as God, in creating Adam, "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living [2] soul"[2]), thus vividly showing them and all Christians that, [3] though no longer visible, He was still their vital breath;[3] that [4] He would dwell in them by His spirit;[4] and be with them and also all His servants, "alway, even unto the end of the [5] world".[5]

When instructing Nicodemus He had already likened the Spirit's unseen but most powerful influence to the wind [6] (*pneuma*, spirit or wind);[6] and thus, at Pentecost, the "sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind" was a most fitting pre- [7] cursor of the great outflowing of the Spirit which ensued.[7] In short, Christ's breathing on His disciples as He uttered the words "Receive ye the Holy Ghost" was, like the bread and the wine of the Lord's Supper—"Take, eat; this is my body. . . . Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the covenant"—simply an outward material symbol intended to bring home to feeble spiritual apprehensions inward, life-giving truth.

Every man who does his own honest thinking about the symbols, figures and parables of Christ, and who reflects that no "priest" will shield him at the judgment day from

[1] Luke xxiv. 13, 18, 33, 36. [2] Gen. ii. 7.
[3] Gal. ii. 20. [4] John xiv. 16, 17; Eph. iii. 16, 17; Col. i. 27.
[5] Matt. xxviii. 20. [6] John iii. 8. [7] Acts ii. 2-4.

the consequences of vital error upon them, will readily perceive His real meaning and intention by them. In John vi. 63 the Creator of man and of language says: "the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life". What sane man takes this literally? The *words* as He spake them were, in themselves, mere breath, sound; and to-day on New Testament pages they are simply printer's ink. But they are nevertheless freighted with stupendous truths which, wafted by the Holy Spirit to the human conscience, become either "a savour from death unto death" or "from life unto life".[1] Falling on Pharisean ears, they excite murderous [1]
intentions which are carried out on Calvary. Falling on ears not wilfully closed against the truth, they become spirit, life, deliverance from the guilt and the love of sin.

The subsequent history of Christ's leading symbols, including that of the water of baptism in which the believer is figuratively buried with Him into death, and raised in the likeness of His resurrection,[2] only too sadly shows that if [2]
they are received in the sacramentarian sense, they become to the partaker of them the letter that killeth instead of the spirit that bringeth life.[3] [3]

It will be seen that in a most important aspect Christ's far-reaching words "Receive ye the Holy Ghost"—like those recorded in Matt. xviii. 18 and xxviii. 18, 19, 20—apply not only to the apostles but to the officers, pastors, evangelists and *members* of all Christian communities. To every redeemed soul He says: "as the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you"—"And he that heareth, let him say, Come".[4] [4]
In every case, too, we know His words have force and operancy exactly to the extent of our fulfilment of their essential conditions. Unless we regard them as our vital breath, unless we learn and practise the precepts and commandments of His word, do we not fail to spiritually receive

[1] 2 Cor. ii. 15. [2] Rom. vi. 3, 4; Col. ii. 12.
[3] 2 Cor. iii. 6. [4] Rev. xxii. 17.

[1] Him, to speak by the Holy Ghost as "oracles of God"[1] who [2] "have an anointing from the Holy One,"[2] and to make judgments which are ratified in heaven?

Having seen that Christ's breathing upon the disciples before His ascension was not their appointment to office, but a symbolic act to bring home to them and all Christians their ceaseless dependence upon His Holy Spirit, let us now (remembering how often God accomplishes many purposes by one act) consider whether it had not also an additional reference (*a*) to the apostles as Christ's chosen witnesses and, through them, (*b*) to the true and only "apostolic succession," *the gospels and epistles which, as "the word of God," preserved their testimony and have ever since published it to the world.*

As His apostles were the chosen depositaries of His truth, and as it was of measureless importance to a lost world that they, the witnesses, recorders and expositors of His words and works, should be inspired with *inerrancy in remembering and declaring the facts and truths essential to salvation,* including *a fortiori* the revelation of what was forgivable and what was not forgivable sin, is it not probable that the symbol of breathing upon them was intended to show them and the world that that intellectual gift—His own infallible declara- [3] tion of the truth—was now being conveyed?[3]

Indeed the words "it is the Spirit that beareth witness, [4] because the Spirit is the truth";[4] Christ's assurance to the [5] eleven[5] that the Holy Spirit "shall teach you all things and

[1] 1 Peter iv. 11. [2] 1 John ii. 20.

[3] "Then the Lord put forth His hand, and touched my mouth; and the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth: see, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, and to destroy and to overthrow; to build, and to plant" (Jer. i. 9, 10).

Could Jeremiah truthfully say, as he so often says, "Thus saith the Lord" if, in these divine messages, he did not simply echo the words of God? How necessary, then, was it for the apostles to be inerrant in their record of the facts and truths concerning eternal life in Christ!

[4] 1 John v. 7. [5] John xiv. 26.

bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you";[1] the 1
obviously complete report of His last solemn address and sacrificial prayer in the upper room given in the fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth chapters of John's gospel; together with many other most detailed and circumstantial records of His divine words and deeds, all impel us to conclude that His breathing upon them and His utterance of the words "Receive ye the Holy Ghost" synchronised with His gift to them of inerrancy as witnesses of His life and teaching and of His death, resurrection and ascension to God.

It is certain that very remarkable mental powers were inspired by the Holy Ghost. In Heb. ii. 4 we read of "God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will," and in 1 Cor. xii. 4-11, amongst the constellation of these gifts of the Spirit, we find miraculous intellectual powers of various kinds occupying a very prominent place. Indeed the first preaching of the Gospel after Christ's ascension was heralded by an extraordinary gift of tongues.[2] 2

We cannot doubt that, with the inerrant records of *the past* now imprinted on the mind of the apostles, there was yet to be included the further teaching which Christ had to give them whilst "appearing unto them by the space of forty days and speaking the things concerning the Kingdom of God". Did He then, as "Leader and Commander," impart to them during those remaining days the great constitutional principles of His organisation? Before His crucifixion He had (obviously prophetically) referred to His Ecclesia by name as a visible, definitely organised, brotherhood, specifying in detail the several steps that were to be taken by a

[1] This *miraculous* memory gift of the Spirit is in no degree surprising when we recall the kindred *natural* phenomenon—the minute and exact recollection of past events which floods the mind of drowning men.

[2] Acts ii.

wronged member towards an aggrieving brother: the last re-
[1] sort being an appeal to the Ecclesia in its judicial capacity.[1]

Did He then fill out His plan, or were its great features, one after another, communicated subsequently by His Spirit as successive difficulties or crises confronted the community and made the revelation necessary?

The administrative principles embodied in the apostolic precedents on which, as foundations, the *constitution* of "the Ecclesia of God" was built, were, as we have already seen, an enormous advance on the farthest developments of Greek civil government; and it is simply incredible that "unlearned and ignorant" fishermen could have derived them from any
[2] other than a divine source, *i.e.*, from Christ Himself.[2]

Their perfect constructive policy must have deeply impressed the brotherhood. They themselves could not but be struck with the parallel between their own position and that of Moses in the erection of the tent of meeting. He was "warned" of God to carry out the directions given him *during his forty days' communion with Him.* "See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern that was
[3] showed thee in the mount."[3] And the apostles, realising their responsibilities as foundation-stones of a far more
[4] glorious though invisible building,[4] would be anxious, first, to proclaim the transfiguring spiritual truths and precepts of
[5] Christ which would produce myriads of "living stones,"[5] and, next, the divine laws of the outward organisation which, applied in His Spirit, would, in every city, build His people
[6] together "into a holy temple in the Lord".[6] Were not

[1] Matt. xviii. 15-18.

[2] Referring doubtless to His great mystical community, Christ said: ". . . I will build my Ecclesia" (Matt. xvi. 18). Was He not also the architect and builder of the visible community, the Ecclesia Local, endowed as it was with the wisest, strongest and most just governmental principles the world has ever known?

[3] Heb. viii. 5.

[4] Eph. ii. 20, 21, 22.

[5] 1 Peter ii. 5.

[6] Eph. ii. 21.

these principles, in all human probability, communicated to them as the founders and organisers of His community[1] [1] *during their forty days' communion with Him* after His resurrection,[2] and before He "ascended far above all the heavens"?[3] [2] [3]

[1] Rev. xxi. 14.

[2] "Appearing unto them by the space of forty days, and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God" (Acts i. 3).

[3] Eph. iv. 10. David, when about to die, directed Solomon his son about the building of the temple. "He gave him the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit" (1 Chron. xxviii. 12). Did not "the Son of David," likewise, before His departure from earth, give directions for building in each city the glorious spiritual temple which was to be His "body"? (1 Cor. iii. 16, 17; xii. 27; 2 Cor. vi. 16). And should not each of His communities—in loving loyalty to His wish that His members might be one—build itself into "a glorious *Ecclesia*, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing"?

CHAPTER VIII

THE LONG ECLIPSE OF THE ECCLESIA

122. Apostolic succession through the laying on of episcopal hands. 123. Has this the essential signs or "notes"? (1) The apostolic spirit? (2) The apostolic power to work miracles and impart the gift of tongues and prophecy? (3) The apostolic organization? 124. "Bishop" and "elder" simply different New Testament names for the one office. Every Ecclesia had a plurality of these officers. 125. The episcopalian bishop born after the canon had closed. All attempts fail to make Timothy, Titus and James into "bishops". 130. The "angels" of the seven Ecclesias not bishops, but messengers. They might advantageously be restored. 132. The episcopacy displaced the Theocracy! The origin of the priest. The sapping and mining of the Ecclesia. 136. The Ecclesia rulers sanction the displacement of their divine Head. They bow to an episcopal lord. 136. The creation of the clerical caste. The bishops associate, and destroy the Ecclesias. 137. Through centuries of controversy, intrigue and bloodshed they wrestle for primacy. Sacerdotalism, supported by the secular arm, spreads throughout Christendom. The Bible buried in dead languages. Persecution suppresses "heretics". The "Christian" nations everywhere lose their morals. 138. The bishops' policy exterminates Christianity in Carthage. 140. How they might have saved their nation. 141. Episcopacy responsible for the rise and growth of Christ's two greatest foes. 142. Instead of claiming ascendency, it should plead for its admission to the brotherhood. "The spirit of the age" and Christian wranglers. 145. Free Church ministers and the clerical caste.

WITH the several conclusions before us—(*a*) that, both in the case of miracle working and of appointment to highest office, the laying on of hands was a mere outward symbol which the Holy Spirit sometimes employed and sometimes did not, and which *per se* was absolutely destitute of power and efficacy; (*b*) that there is no evidence that the apostles were appointed by Christ by the laying on of hands; (*c*)

that whereas, under the apostolic scheme, permanent provision is made for appointing evangelists or missionaries by the elected evangelisation committees of the Ecclesias, the appointment of the officers of the Ecclesia itself, *i.e.*, of the preacher and the pastor and teacher, is left entirely to each Ecclesia and its folds or tribes—no person or persons being anywhere designated by the apostles to perform the act—let us now investigate the claim of the Greek, Roman Catholic and Anglican denominations to "apostolic succession" through the laying on of *episcopal* hands.

Such an examination is of the first importance in presence of the fact that the vast majority of the clergy of these bodies do not recognise the validity of the "orders" of Free Church ministers; but, ecclesiastically and socially, regard the latter as people of a lower caste, and not members of Christ's body on a perfectly equal footing with themselves.

And since this attitude is the only remaining obstacle to Christian federal union, it behoves all Anglicans who desire such union, and who realise the serious responsibility of their denomination for preventing it, to do their own thinking on the subject by searching the Scriptures and ascertaining whether this extraordinary claim to "apostolic succession" has any foundation in "the Word of God". If they carefully and without bias consider what were the outstanding characteristics of the apostles' life and work after Christ's ascension, and what therefore (if they had any exclusive successors) should be the "notes" differentiating their spiritual descendants—the modern "apostles"—from the rank and file of ordinary Christians, we think they may be led into something like the following train of thought:—

(1) The apostles fraternised on equal terms with people of every class who loved their glorious Lord.[1] Obeying implicitly the injunction "What God hath cleansed, make not thou

[1] Acts ii. 41-47; iv. 32-35; vi. 7.

common," they abandoned once for all the strongest caste prejudice which perhaps the world has ever seen.[1]

This highest and most characteristic "note" of the true "apostolical succession," the apostolic spirit,[2] nay the spirit of Christ Himself,[3] and that love of the brethren which is the proof both to ourselves[4] and the world[5] that we are truly His, is lacking in the attitude of nearly all our bishops and clergy towards Free Church ministers. On the other hand, it is gratifying to know that it is almost invariably shown in the bearing of the latter towards *them* whenever they are *received as equals*.

(2) Those who claim the unique status and prerogatives of the apostles must produce their credentials, *i.e.*, give tangible evidence of their possessing apostolic powers. The Jews who, under the Old Covenant, had received a succession of angel and prophet messengers, naturally required a divine attestation of the apostolic message; and God Himself acknowledged the reasonableness of the demand by enabling His witnesses to work many signs and wonders of healing among the people.[6] And not only so. Through "laying on of hands" they conferred on believers power to speak with tongues and prophesy,[7] a gift which, however, we must not forget *the recipient could not transmit to others*.[8] Those who questioned Paul's apostleship received the reply: "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, by signs and wonders and mighty works".[9]

The gift of tongues and of prophecy conferred by him instantly evidenced its miraculous nature.[10] Now this "note" is entirely wanting in our *apostle-successors*, for none among them profess to work miracles; much less, through "laying on of hands," to *impart* to others miracle-working power.[11]

[1] John iv. 9; Acts viii. 14-17; xi. 1-18, 20-26; xxi. 20-xxii. 24.
[2] Rom. xii. 10; 1 Cor. iv. 10; Eph. iv. 2; Tit. iii. 2.
[3] Matt. v. 3, 5; xi. 29; xxi. 5; Luke ix. 49, 50.
[4] 1 Thess. iv. 9; Heb. xiii. 1; 1 John iii. 14. [5] John xiii. 35.
[6] Acts v. 12-16. [7] Compare Acts viii. 17, 18 with xix. 6.
[8] See the reference to Philip on p. 97.
[9] 2 Cor. xii. 12. [10] Acts xix. 6.
[11] Knowing that their claim to apostolic *succession* is barred (*a*) as eye-witnesses of the life and death of Christ, (*b*) as miracle-workers and conferrers of

(3) There still remains, however, one very important "note". In Church organisation can it be truly said that our bishops and clergy are "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets"? Nay, has not our State Church robbed Christ of His crown rights by placing itself under the sovereignty: (*a*) of a King, and of a Parliament composed of Protestants, Roman Catholics, Jews, agnostics, atheists, worldings and libertines who most jealously guard their power to maintain or to alter at will its constitution, administration and worship, (*b*) of a hierarchy of "enthroned" ecclesiastics, each of them chosen by a sovereign or a prime minister, and placed by him over all the "priests and deacons" of a huge diocese or agglomerate of "parishes"? "Priest," our Low Church vicars tell us, means only *presbyter;* but thousands of our clerics are to-day, with the virtual connivance of the bishops, claiming the ghostly powers and prerogatives of that most desolating of castes, the priestly order.[1] Surely, however, whilst a *State* Church exists the nation has a right to demand that the law—now openly defied and disregarded with impunity by "ordained" vow-breakers and confessed haters of Protestantism—shall be obeyed.

The action of our bishops in this great national crisis in refusing to remedy the evil themselves, and in not allowing the communicants of each parish to grapple with it, is a complete travesty of apostolic principles and motives.

In presence of the Master's estimate of the value of inherited

miracle-working power, the bishops have the hardihood to make a still larger claim, *viz.*, that ghostly powers are, and have from the beginning been, transmitted by manual ordination through their "unbroken episcopal succession". *So did not the apostles.* There is not a trace of New Testament evidence either that they claimed to confer, or did confer, upon others the power *to transmit* the miracle-working gift which the Spirit had empowered them *as apostles* to *convey.*

[1] "The only priests under the Gospel, designated as such in the New Testament, are the saints, the members of the Christian brotherhood. As individuals all Christians are priests alike. As members of a corporation, they have their several and distinct offices" (Bishop Lightfoot, *The Christian Ministry*, p. 184). If this be true, why, when so many people are deluded by sacerdotalist pretensions, should Anglicans continue to distinctively and thus falsely designate presbyters "priests"?

"succession" we must honestly admit that *apostolic succession, apart from apostolic life and practice, is dead.* To Jews of unquestioned lineage, proudly asserting "Our father is Abraham," Christ replied: "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. . . . Ye are of your
1 father the devil."[1] John the Baptist also told them—"God
2 is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham".[2]

Since, then, our maintenance of this anti-apostolic figment forms an insuperable barrier between Free Church Christians and ourselves, and thereby makes us responsible for the existing shameless "schism" in "the body of Christ"; since, moreover, there is no prospect of our internally agreeing to excise it from our doctrines, and still less of Parliament empowering us to do so; since, further, the State connection makes it practically hopeless to deal with other burning questions in our Church, it seems our plain duty to free ourselves from control by an alien authority, and when we are a self-governing community to reorganise our Episcopal system on the just, wise, broad basis of membership franchise.

All truth-loving apologists of Episcopalianism now frankly admit that—like our words superintendent and overlooker—the words "bishop" (*episkopos*) and "elder" (*presbuteros*) are
3 simply different New Testament names for the same office.[3] Indeed in presence of Acts xx. 17 and 28 and Titus i. 5 and 7 this cannot be denied; nor the equivalent fact (appearing so clearly in Phil. i. 1) that there were numbers of bishops in each city.

And, as none of the numerous references to these Ecclesia
4 bishop-elders[4] indicate the existence of any superior over

[1] John viii. 39, 44. [2] Luke iii. 8.

[3] There is much to be said for the view that these two words were employed, because "*episkopos*" was the title most used by Gentiles and "*presbuteros*" the one most familiar to Jewish minds.

[4] In the record of the memorable sitting of the Jerusalem council (Acts xv. and xvi.) the apostles and the elders (*presbuteroi*) of the Ecclesia are mentioned six times (Acts xv. 2, 4, 6, 22 and 23; xvi. 4); but as there is no mention whatever of "bishops" (*episcopos*) we must conclude that the elders were bishops (as is indeed demonstrated by Acts xx. 17 and 28 and Tit. i. 5 and 7), but obviously not "episcopalian" bishops.

them, it is plain that Episcopalianism—the lordship of the single bishop—cannot be found within the boards of the New Testament. Both Peter and John condemn the autocratic tendency,[1] and each of them pointedly calls himself simply a presbyter or elder.[2]

Probably no clearer demonstration of the identity of the "bishop" and the "elder" of the New Testament could be written than the evidence on the point marshalled by Bishop Lightfoot in his oft-cited treatise on the Philippians:—

"Of the identity of the 'bishop' and 'presbyter' in the language of the apostolic age, the following evidence seems conclusive:—

"(1) In the opening of this epistle St. Paul salutes the 'bishops' and 'deacons'. Now it is incredible that he should recognise only the first and third order and pass over the second, though the second was absolutely essential to the existence of a church and formed the staple of its ministry. It seems therefore to follow of necessity that the 'bishops' are identical with the 'presbyters'. Whether or not the Philippian Church at this time possessed also a 'bishop' in the later sense of the term, is a question which must be reserved for the present.

"(2) In the Acts (xx. 17) St. Paul is represented as summoning to Miletus the 'elders' or 'presbyters' of the Church of Ephesus. Yet in addressing them immediately after he appeals to them as 'bishops' or 'overseers' of the Church (xx. 28).

"(3) Similarly St. Peter, appealing to the 'presbyters' of the churches addressed by him, in the same breath urges them to 'fulfil the office of bishops' (ἐπισκοποῦντες) with disinterested zeal (1 Peter v. 1, 2).

"(4) Again in the First Epistle to Timothy St. Paul, after describing the qualifications for the office of a 'bishop' (iii. 1-7), goes on at once to say what is required of 'deacons'

[1] 1 Peter v. 2, 3; 3 John 9, 10, 11. [2] 1 Peter v. 1; 2 John 1; 3 John 1.

(iii. 8-13). He makes no mention of presbyters. The term 'presbyter,' however, is not unknown to him; for having occasion in a later passage to speak of Christian ministers he calls these officers no longer 'bishops' but 'presbyters' (v. 17-19).

"(5) The same identification appears still more plainly from the apostle's directions to Titus (i. 5-7): 'That thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting and ordain *elders* in every city, as I appointed thee; if any one be *blameless*, the husband of one wife, having believing children who are not charged with riotousness or unruly; for a *bishop* [1] (*τὸν ἐπίσκοπον*) must be blameless,'" etc.[1]

Lightfoot follows up these crucial facts with convincing evidence that the post-apostolic "fathers" held the same view. But that must be taken for what it is worth. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, surely there is no morning for them" (Isa. viii. 20).

The following words by Dr. Moule, who now occupies Dr. Lightfoot's see, plainly indicate his conviction of the Scriptural validity of the "orders" of the non-episcopalian elder. But as both these eminent men (see, with regard to Lightfoot, his correspondence with Dr. Moulton in the published life of the latter) have shown themselves lacking in the moral [2] courage necessary to give practical effect to their views,[2] they

[1] Lightfoot's *Epistle to the Philippians*, pp. 94, 95.

[2] By obeying "the law of Christ" when it involves breaking the law of man, as did the apostles thrice in succession when the authorities commanded them to cease preaching Jesus and the Resurrection: (1) Acts iv. 3, 18, 19, 33; v. 12-16; (2) Acts v. 17, 18, 19, 25; (3) Acts v. 40, 41, 42. Their action in the matter had God's direct approval and blessing (Acts iv. 18-20, 29-33; v. 14-16, 17-20, 40-42). Now no Anglican bishop has even gone so far as to move for a change in the law to enable him to sanction exchanges of pulpits between Anglican and Free Church ministers. (Such exchanges are constantly taking place between Baptist, Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian ministers.) Still less is any bishop prepared to attack this scandal to Christianity either by sanctioning such exchanges in spite of "the law" and taking the consequences, or by resigning his see rather than be a party to ostracising any godly "brethren" of Christ (Heb. ii. 11).

have manifestly much responsibility for the prevailing Christless disunion and the fearful evils it entails.

"Well do I know how wide and deep is the conviction that the Episcopate is the one assured and assuring depositary of the grace of God. But I see no real proof of that position in the Word of God. I see grave disproof of it in the long history of Christendom, not least in the great field of Christian missions, and I know that however boldly modern manuals may tell us that 'no bishop no Church' is a primary Christian truth, that tenet was declined by such Anglican bishops as Andrews, Hall, Ussher and Cosin, to name only those few names out of well-nigh the whole succession of our greatest Churchmen from the Reformation onwards till within quite modern times" (*Christian Irishman,* March, 1904, p. 39).

Historically, we all know that the Greek Church bishop, the Roman Catholic bishop and the Anglican bishop were born after the New Testament canon had closed; and we can thus fully appreciate the significance of the fact that no one ever ventures to speak of a "New Testament episcopate" or of an "apostolic episcopate," but only of "the historic episcopate".[1] How truly did Dean Alford remark: [1] "The '*episcopi*' of the New Testament have officially nothing in common with our *bishops*".[2] Notwithstanding [2] all this, some have attempted to maintain that Timothy and Titus were bishops in the Episcopalian sense; but a close and exhaustive study of the record shows beyond doubt that they were missionaries following up, under Paul's direction, his

[1] "The apostolic office terminated with the apostolic times, and by its very nature admitted not of continuance; the episcopal office, in its ordinary sense, sprung up after the apostolic times; and the two are entirely distinct. The confusion of the two belongs to that unsafe and slippery ground in Church matters, the only refuge from which is in the traditional system of Rome" (Alford's *New Testament for English Readers*—Note to Acts xiii. 2).

[2] *Ibid.*—(Note to 1 Tim. iii. 1).

own pioneer missionary work; and that one of their duties
1 was the appointment of the elders elected by each Ecclesia.[1]

Some Anglican writers have complacently assumed James to be "the first bishop of Jerusalem". But James' unquestioned prominence seems always connected with some
2 important *crisis* in the affairs of the Jerusalem Ecclesia;[2] and it is thus a much more reasonable conjecture that he was the chairman of its Referendum Council, the most memorable of whose sittings is described in Acts xv. His action there, after the discussion of the circumcision question had exhausted itself, consists perfectly with that supposition: he simply summed up the consensus of conviction produced by the speeches of Peter, Barnabas and Paul, and in all probability his remarks were at once followed with a motion which was carried *nem. con.* The Greek words *egō krinō* (translated "my judgment is" in v. 19) might with equal accuracy be rendered "my conclusion is"; and James manifestly did nothing more than focus and give business-like expression to the feeling of the meeting by his resolution; indeed, still clearer evidence of his non-autocratic attitude in the matter is supplied by v. 21: "Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole Ecclesia, to choose men out of their company, and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas," etc. Some time after this, as already noted, we find the same body, under the chairmanship of James, deal-
3 ing with another crisis.[3]

There are apologists of episcopacy who seriously maintain
4 that the "angels" of the seven Minor Asian Ecclesias[4] were the ancestors of the modern bishop. But a fair-minded examination of the word *aggelos* would show them that it

[1] Paul, the great apostle evangelist and founder of Ecclesias, enjoins Timothy to "do the work of an evangelist" (2 Tim. iv. 5), and refers to him as "my fellow-worker" (Rom. xvi. 21). Of Titus also he speaks as "my partner and my fellow-worker" (2 Cor. viii. 23; see also 1 Tim. iii. 1-7; v. 22; Tit. i. 5).

[2] Acts xii. 17; xv. 13; xxi. 18; Gal. i. 19 in conjunction with Acts ix. 26-30.

[3] See p. 93. [4] Rev. i. 20.

simply means *messenger*—heavenly or earthly as the case may be. All four evangelists use the word in both senses. Examples of heavenly messengers.—In Matt. i. 20 we read, "an angel (*aggelos*) of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream saying," etc.; in Mark i. 13, "and the angels (*aggeloi*) ministered unto him"; Luke xxii. 43, "And there appeared unto him an angel (*aggelos*) from heaven, strengthening him"; in Rev. xv. 1 John tells us of "seven angels (*aggelous*) having seven plagues, which are the last, for in them is finished the wrath of God". Examples of earthly messengers.—In Matt. xi. 10; Mark i. 2; Luke vii. 27, the record says: "Behold I send my messenger (*aggelon*) before thy face"; in Luke ix. 51, 52, "He stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, and sent messengers (*aggelous*) before his face"; in Rev. xxi. 17 John says, "according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel" (*aggelou*).

The last example, it will be observed, seems to merge the heavenly and the earthly being in one. Two other instances of the earthly *aggelos* will be found in Luke vii. 24 and James ii. 25. There are altogether over 150 mentions of *aggelos* in the New Testament, and in every case the reference is to a messenger or agent, bearing or executing the instructions of another. None of them contains any suggestion of administratorship, the chief function of the Episcopalian bishop.

That the *aggelos* of each of the Asian Ecclesias is a *heavenly* messenger, seems most improbable when we reflect that, amongst all the numerous mentions of angels elsewhere in Scripture, there is no such suggestion as that of an angel of God reprehended as the representative and teacher of a blameworthy earthly community.

We conclude, therefore, that they are earthly messengers, and that, like the prophets under the Old Covenant, the function of each is to be such a faithful mouthpiece of the divine message that he is virtually an oracle of God.[1] "I will

[1] 1 Peter iv. 11.

put my words in his mouth and he shall speak unto them all
1 that I shall command him."[1] These words were we know
2 spoken of Christ Himself.[2] The duty of the *aggelos* to Christ is therefore to deliver without fear or favour "what the Spirit saith to the Ecclesias," and, through them, to every in-
3 dividual of their membership.[3]

4 Elsewhere[4] we have ventured to suggest that the twelve tribal angels (*aggeloi*—messengers) at the twelve gates of the New Jerusalem typify each denomination's Gospel heralds or messengers, and that, through their preaching, "the glory and
5 the honour of the nations" are brought into the holy city.[5]

In Rev. xiv. 6 all missionaries and evangelists seem to be symbolised by a single angel "having an eternal Gospel to proclaim unto them that dwell on the earth". And so here the *aggelos* or messenger of each Ecclesia is probably a type of all its preachers and "pastors and teachers" who faithfully deliver the message transmitted through them by Christ.

It is true these to-day address only sections of "the flock" in local gatherings—"synagogues" as James calls them,
6 "churches" as we style them now[6]—whereas Christ's seven messages are in each case directed to an entire Ecclesia, *i.e.*, to the whole Christian community in a given city. But if New Testament reunion were brought about, and an annual address were delivered to all the Christians of a city by a chosen member of some denomination, each denomination yearly electing the speaker in turn; and if earnest prayer were offered beforehand by "the whole Ecclesia" that the appointed speaker might be so endued with the Holy Ghost
7 as to express "the mind of Christ,"[7] as a faithful *messenger* of His Word, we would then have a large practical realisation

[1] Deut. xviii. 18. [2] See also John viii. 26-28; xiv. 10.
[3] "He that hath an ear, *let him hear* what the Spirit saith to the Ecclesias" (Rev. ii. 7, 11, 17, etc.).
[4] See p. 158. [5] Rev. xxi. 26.
[6] James ii. 2. See p. 37. [7] 1 Cor. ii. 16.

of the benefits of His wounding and healing *messages* to the seven Ecclesias. As things are, there is no one in our cities who feels he has a mandate to address any community of Christians larger than that of a church or at most of a denomination, or particular group of denominations.

The contention that, although we find no "Episcopalian" bishops in the New Testament, circumstances very soon *made them necessary*, obviously begs the question.[1] The advocates of this view would do well to consider what the rise of the bishop really involved. If there is one thing clearer than another with regard to the constitution of "the Ecclesia of God," it is that it is a body of members under Christ its glorious and only Head.[2] Every elder, therefore, who in the early centuries arrogated to himself, *as* bishop, the headship of the community of Christians in any city, not only destroyed its democracy, but also—however unconscious of the significance of his act—overturned its *Theocracy* by "enthroning" himself in the place of its divine and only King.[3]

Another metaphor conducts us to the same conclusion. In every Christian community or "Ecclesia of God" there are various pastors or shepherds (*i.e.*, spiritual overseers) tending different portions (folds) of "the flock,"[4] but the flock has only one "*chief shepherd*," *i.e.*, Christ.[5]

The mists overhanging early Church history have not yet sufficiently lifted to show us all the stages in the production of the full-blown bishop; but the process was rapid, and it is

[1] Necessity—that refuge of weak human nature ever at hand to justify its departures from divine laws and plans!

[2] 1 Cor. xii., and specially v. 27.

[3] Can we wonder that such seed ultimately bore "fruit after its kind"—the "vicegerency" of the Pope of Rome? See p. 136.

[4] Acts xx. 28; 1 Peter v. 3.

[5] 1 Peter v. 4. Even to-day evangelical Anglicans at times thoughtlessly refer to a bishop as the "chief shepherd" of the flock!

not difficult to surmise how the eagerly sought result was brought about.

We have seen that it was part of the apostolic plan and practice for the missionary who evangelised a heathen city to appoint the elders who were elected by the members of the
1 Ecclesia he founded.[1] In the nature of things, he had great influence over his children in the faith. And if he was a lover of power, or preferred the luxuries of a sedentary life to
2 the perils and privations of the missionary career,[2] nothing was easier for him than to convince the elders that it would greatly further the edification and extension of the Ecclesia f he settled permanently in their midst as chief shepherd of the flock.

They had at first no written laws or statutes for their guidance. Probably he alone possessed portions of the gospels or epistles and was thus the sole depositary of apostolic practice and precedent. He could point them, for example, to the fact that Paul continued to work in Ephesus for "the space of three years". We can see how in almost every case such a proposal would be eagerly and gratefully hailed by the unsophisticated converts. And now, having
3 become their "head," the ambitious man[3] would naturally cast about to strengthen his position. Could he do so more effectually than by launching the idea that he was a "successor of the apostles"? And how could he better gain over the support of the elders than by magnifying *their* office also—telling them that they were the successors of the *priests* under the Mosaic law, and had all the powers and prerogatives of that sacred office?

How vital and far-reaching were these changes in the government and whole character of the Ecclesia we shall presently see.

[1] P. 97 *seq.* [2] 2 Cor. xi. 26.
[3] Acts xx. 29, 30; 1 Peter v. 3; 3 John 9, 10.

Whereas, at the first, we read of "the laying on of the hands of the presbytery"[1] (*i.e.*, probably the Evangelisation Committee of the elders), and also see such a committee appointing great, God-chosen men for missionary work,[2] we soon find only one body of presbyters, and these, not simply deprived of their appointing powers, but made dependent for their own appointment on an episcopal lord!

Thus, for a mess of pottage, the elders or presbyters—despising their birthright as joint spiritual overseers of a community designed by God to lift up an omnipotent Saviour to a dying world—threw away the leadership which was permanently secured to them by the apostolic organisation, the guardianship of "the temple of God,"[3] by permitting an Ecclesiastic, thirsting for supreme power, to become the cynosure of all eyes and largely to eclipse the personality of Christ Himself.

That the creation of the "Episcopalian" bishop and his extraordinary prerogatives was conceived by unfaithful and ambitious missionaries there seems only too much reason to believe. By adroitly citing the fact that the apostles as evangelists "laid hands" on the elders of the new community, whilst suppressing the further facts (*a*) that these elders (departmental and other) were first elected by the Ecclesia members, (*b*) that the apostles, instead of providing "ordainers" of future elders, left every Ecclesia free to make its own appointing arrangements, (*c*) that the Evangelisation Committee both chose and appointed evangelists; a designing founder of a new Ecclesia, taking advantage of its ignorance in these and other matters, would have little difficulty in inducing it to entrust him with the widest "ordaining," and thus controlling, powers. And so, in a relatively short time, we see "priests," "deacons" and graduating "catechumens" all alike dependent for the validation of their positions on "the laying on" of episcopal hands!

[1] 1 Tim. iv. 14. [2] Acts xiii. 1-3; xiv. 14. [3] 2 Thess. ii. 4.

Some of the steps in the *succession* of unscrupulous and presumptuous perversions of apostolic organisation and practice are vividly described by Gibbon. "The progress of the ecclesiastical authority gave birth to the memorable distinction of the laity and of the clergy which had been unknown to the Greeks and Romans,"[1] and also, we need scarcely add, to Christ and His apostles.[2]

The alliance of the bishops of the various cities to fortify and increase their individual control was a fatal blow at the autonomy of the apostolic Ecclesias. "As the legislative authority of the particular Churches was insensibly superseded by the use of councils, the bishops obtained by their alliance a much larger share of executive and arbitrary power; and, as soon as they were connected by a sense of their common interest, they were enabled to attack, with united vigour, the original rights of their clergy and people. The prelates of the third century imperceptibly changed the language of exhortation into that of command, scattered the seeds of future usurpations, and supplied, by Scripture analogies and declamatory rhetoric, their deficiency of force and of reason."[3]

The bishops claimed to be "The vicegerents of Christ, the successors of the apostles, and the mystic substitutes of the high priest of the Mosaic law. Their exclusive privilege of conferring the sacerdotal character invaded the freedom both of clerical and popular elections; and if, in the administration of the Church, they still consulted the judgment of presbyters, or the inclination of the people, they most carefully inculcated the merit of such a voluntary condescension."[4]

Obedience, however, "was not imposed without some efforts on one side, and some resistance on the other. The demo-

[1] Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, vol. i., p. 326.
[2] Matt. xi. 29; xxiii. 7-12; 2 Cor. xi. 7; Eph. iii. 8.
[3] Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, vol. i., p. 324.
[4] *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 324.

cratical part of the constitution was, in many places, very warmly supported by the zealous or interested opposition of the inferior clergy. But their patriotism received the ignominious epithets of faction and schism; and the episcopal cause was indebted for its rapid progress to the labours of many active prelates, who, like Cyprian of Carthage, could reconcile the arts of the most ambitious statesman with the Christian virtues which seem adapted to the character of a saint and martyr."[1] 1

The lust of power which had created the "bishop" next led to centuries of ecclesiastical rivalry (a rivalry maintained not only by controversy but often by fraud, force and the sacrifice of hecatombs of human lives) between these hierarchs for the primacy, as archbishops, patriarchs, exarchs, metropolitans and popes, and for the authority of antagonistic council creeds. This internecine contest at length found an arena worthy of itself in a prolonged deadly struggle for supremacy between the Eastern Church at Constantinople and the Western Church at Rome.[2] 2

The personal character of numbers of the bishops—considered apart from the blighting sacerdotalism which they introduced and nurtured—was in every way estimable and exemplary; but, as the tide of priestcraft steadily rose, there were few of the prelates who did not abandon themselves to political aims and methods. Their crowning disservice to Christ, when at length their example ceased to support their

[1] Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, vol. i., p. 325.

[2] From the beginning of history the inordinate ambitions of the sacerdotal caste have been a scandal to the very name of religion. "Like the high priests of Assur, who preceded the Kings of Assyria, as we have learnt from the cuneiform inscriptions, or like Jethro 'the priest of Midian' according to the Old Testament, the first rulers of Saba had been priests rather than kings. It was only in course of time that the priests had transformed themselves into kings" (Sayce, *The Higher Criticism and the Monuments*, p. 41). In our own day how hard dies their claim to "temporal" power!

precept and the Word of God condemned both their lives and their sacramentalist teaching, was their virtual burial of the sacred writings—the true and only apostolic succession—in dead languages. "Woe unto you lawyers! for ye took away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and
1 them that were entering in ye hindered."[1]

The worthlessness of their unscriptural Christianity was soon seen in its effects on the races who were "converted" wholesale by their external rites. Notwithstanding the frequent extraordinary influence of the higher ecclesiastics over "the powers that be," they did little or nothing to teach the latter the principles of Christian statesmanship; but employed their time and energies mainly in intrigues to induce them to enforce council decrees and persecute "heretics," regardless of the frightfully sanguinary contests which ensued. Instead of infusing Christian stamina into the nations of the Roman Empire who were perishing under the corrupting influences of wealth and luxury, they produced communities of spiritual invertebrates who seemed destitute of the *morale* of the pagan Roman legions. Their lack of union, brotherhood, and solidarity as citizens—the result mainly of bitter partisanship in the interminable controversies of the bishops—directly induced, and at the same time disabled them from resisting, the irruptions of the barbarous hordes who, in countless instances, ravaged their homes and harried the land unchecked.

Can we find anything more melancholy in history than "the scourge of God" which fell upon Christianity of this type in the case of Carthage?

A large and prosperous country rent in twain by a bitter religious dispute; both sides, led by bishops, utterly ignoring Christ's solemn words: "My kingdom is not of this world:

[1] Luke xi. 52.

if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight,"[1] and those of His apostle: "If ye bite and devour one [1]
another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another".[2] [2]
A "Donatist" party claiming sole apostolical succession and valid ordination; another of "orthodox Catholics"—with Augustine's "warmest approbation"—moving the Roman Emperor to punish their non-submission. As the result, 300 Donatist "bishops," with "many thousands" of their "inferior clergy," torn from their churches, stripped of their ecclesiastical possessions, banished to the islands, and proscribed by the laws if they presumed to conceal themselves; their congregations deprived of the rights of citizenship and of the exercise of religious worship[3] ("attendance" [3]
even at their "religious assemblies" being "forbidden on pain of death"[4]); "the distracted country," in consequence, [4]
"filled with tumult and bloodshed".[5] The plot thickens; [5]
Genseric, King of the Vandal, but "Christian," savages[6] and [6]
his army of 50,000 are invited over from Spain by Count Boniface the governor, to support him in a quarrel (plotted by a rival) with the Imperial Government at Rome. The embroilment ends with the revelation of the rival's treachery, but too late; for the Vandals, as usual with imported allies, have come to stay. They offer themselves to the Donatists as emancipators. A terrible war ensues, in which the most awful cruelties are perpetrated by Genseric. The nation, strong were it not "divided against itself," fails to give sufficient support to the able general, Boniface. The savage Genseric conquers, rules the country with a rod of iron, and, by his relentless persecution of the Catholics,

[1] John xviii. 36. [2] Gal. v. 15.
[3] Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, vol. i., p. 900.
[4] *Chambers' Encyc.*, Article "Donatists".
[5] *Decline and Fall*, vol. i., p. 900.
[6] Genseric was an Arian "Christian" (see *Decline and Fall*, vol. i., p. 1002).

doubtless reminds them of the retributive judgment, "all they that take the sword" to support a spiritual kingdom
[1] "shall perish with the sword".[1] Genseric, now greatly strengthened, captures Rome itself. He and his son and successor, Hunneric, become the pirates of the Mediterranean and carry devastation and ruin from the Atlantic to Cyrene. As Arian "Christians" they and the next two Vandal kings continue the ruthless oppression of the Catholics. When the seventh century arrives the worn-out "Christianity" of Carthage, powerless to resist the Mohammedan invasion which in other lands also engulfed so much superficial following of the Master, *is so completely submerged that at last not a solitary vestige of it is left in the land!*

Can we resist the conclusion that the "orthodox" bishops, in inducing the Imperial Government to force their views upon their "heretical" brethren, thereby splitting the community into antagonistic sections incapable of joint action against a common foe, were the "direful spring" of Carthage's centuries of woe and of the ultimate extinction of its Christianity?

Had the Carthaginian Christians followed the course of the apostles and elders in the council of the Jerusalem Ecclesia, and kept "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of
[2] peace"[2]—thereby enabling them to decide with *complete*
[3] *unanimity*[3] an infinitely more controversial and difficult question—the result would doubtless have been perfect harmony and the formation, on the first appearance of danger to the State, of a resistless phalanx of Christian citizens, standing shoulder to shoulder in defence of hearth, home and freedom of conscience. Thus "the power" of
[4] "the ruler" would not have borne "the sword in vain,"[4]

[1] Matt. xxvi. 52.
[2] Eph. iv. 3; Acts xv. 28.
[3] Acts xv. 22.
[4] Rom. xiii. 3-6.

but—as with the American pro-slavery rebellion in our own day—the resultant war would have become "a minister of God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil".

Carthage's first calamities as an evangelised community were experienced in full measure also by those nations of Europe which, after receiving the Gospel and handing over "the liberty of the glory of the children of God" [1] to bishops [1] and "priests," were overrun by barbarian hordes, who were in turn whitewashed by the same sacramentalist teaching. Carthage's second sad visitation fell likewise with overwhelming force on the people of Syria, Turkey and Egypt, whose effete, bishop-dominated Christianity and materialism made their possessions a huge prey to the followers of the false prophet.

Can any impartial student of history who has read the heart-sickening record of the acts of the ruling prelates of the East and West during the rapid and continuous decline from primitive Christianity, and who has noted their endless contentions, their emasculating sacerdotalism, their ceaseless intrigues, their murderous resorts to physical force by "the secular arm," [2] doubt that they were the leading cause of [2] that great "falling away" [3] which made possible, on the one [3] hand, the phenomenal rise, expansion and permanent establishment of Mohammedanism, perhaps the worst *external* foe the Kingdom of Christ has ever known; and, on the other, the development of the unscrupulous, Christ-displacing, image-worshipping, indulgence-selling, Bible-burning, persecuting, nation-destroying *system* of Roman Catholicism

[1] Rom. viii. 21.

[2] "If any man leadeth into captivity, into captivity he goeth" (Rev. xiii. 10). The passion for power which impelled the bishops to destroy the organisation of "the Ecclesias of God" became in due time their Nemesis: creating over their heads the papal camarilla which they have for so many centuries implicitly obeyed.

[3] 2 Thess. ii. 3.

which, *semper eadem*, in so many lands, has become the most deeply intrenched of all the *internal* enemies of the Redeemer's cause?

Under a dread sense of its responsibility for these evil developments (for it alone had the helm of "the Church" from the beginning of the "falling away" till the period of the Reformation), and in presence of the historical fact that its State Churches have so often persecuted Nonconformists
1 and opposed great reforms,[1] might not episcopacy, instead of proudly demanding the "ordination" of Free Church ministers by its bishops as a condition precedent of Christian union, much more fittingly plead for its own admission to the brotherhood of the tribes?

It is often urged, in extenuation of the discreditable policies of bishops and others in bygone days, that we are all resist-

[1] The contrast between the noble lives of Anglican bishops in the mission field and the melancholy "achievements" of those at home under the evil inspiration of State-church ascendency cannot but impress the thoughtful mind. "By an almost unanimous vote" the bishops in the House of Lords "threw out the bill for the repeal of the death sentence for sheep-stealing; by twenty-one to two they voted against the first Reform Bill; by twenty to three they voted against the admission of Jews to Parliament; by twenty-four to none they voted against the abolition of Church rates; by twenty-seven to nine they voted against the abolition of the Corn Laws. As for their record on Education, in 1807 they threw out a bill permitting the rate-payers to set up a school in each parish, on the system of unsectarian instruction. In 1820 they did the same thing, refusing to allow the bill to pass unless each teacher was a communicant of the Church of England, and unless the clergy were to have the power to dismiss the teachers if they chose. In 1839 fifteen out of eighteen bishops wrecked the bill to establish a State normal school for the training of teachers on a basis of religious comprehension. In 1834 twenty-two out of twenty-four bishops refused to pass a bill to open the universities to all irrespective of creed. They endeavoured in vain to force through a bill by which every teacher was compelled to be a member of the Church of England. In 1850 they wrecked a bill for the establishment of rate-supported schools under public management. In 1864 they wrecked the bill proposed in Council for the adoption of the conscience clause in districts where there was no possibility of a choice of schools. In 1857 they wrecked two separate bills for the abolition of religious tests in universities, and by fifteen to thirteen they voted against the creation of an Education Department" (S. G. Rudler quoted in *British Weekly*, 3rd May, 1906).

lessly influenced by the spirit of our age. But with God's Word in our hands displaying, as a lamp to our feet and light to our path,[1] the eternal truths and principles of Him who makes us "free indeed,"[2] *why are we not in every age emancipated from the false ideas of our time?*

"Always it is the individual that works for progress, not the age. It was the age that made away with Socrates by poison; it was the age which burned Hus at the stake; the ages have always been the same."[3]

Does not God justly require every generation of those "born from above"[4] to be "the light of the world" and "the salt of the earth"; and have there not in fact in every age been men who, like Vigilantius in the fourth century and Augustine himself in his later days (in entirely altering his view of the treatment of "heretics"), have gone to God's Word thirsting to ascertain His point of view, and thereby been lifted above the deadly mists of prescription and tradition?

What marine board to-day would exonerate a captain for the loss of a splendid vessel if he confessed he had not carefully and constantly examined the charts provided for him in his cabin?

If we realised the tremendous significance of Christ's direction that they who worship the Father must worship Him "in spirit *and truth*,"[5] we would perceive that the most earnest prayer, apart from equally earnest study and *assimilation of Christ* and the life-giving truths and principles[6] *so clearly revealed in His Word*, will not secure us His guidance and deliverance from prevailing errors, any more than it did Augustine when he incurred the awful responsibility of sanctioning the Donatist persecution. But with God's Word before us, and having hearts, brains and consciences to "look, therefore,

[1] Ps. cxix. 105. [2] John viii. 32-36. [3] Goethe.
[4] John iii. 3. [5] John iv. 23, 24.
[6] 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10; Acts xvii. 11; Eph. vi. 14; Phil. iv. 8; John xiii. 17.

[1] whether the light" that is in us "be not darkness," [1] shall we not manfully recognise that He will not encourage our spiritual and mental indolence and childishness by suspending [2] His laws to avert the penalty of their infraction,[2] and that, therefore, our so-called "sincerity" will avail us nothing *if thus influenced we are wrong?*

There can be little doubt that our errors in principle, and therefore policy, spring mainly from our culpable lack of that balanced and harmonious play of the moral and mental faculties which the Holy Spirit imparts through a whole-hearted surrender to Christ, and an eager, open-minded, unprejudiced appropriation of *all* the truths, laws and principles embodied in His words and deeds. Just to the extent of this true heart-surrender, this enlightenment of our minds and [3] consciences by "the Word of Christ," [3] prayerful communication with God brings us a divine peace—a partaking of "the [4] divine nature".[4] In that calm and exalted state Christ quietly walked out of the frenzied mob at Nazareth which was thirsting for His blood! Some modern missionaries have had similar experiences. Such "walking in the light" produces in short that enviable attitude of mind and heart so plainly expressed by the Greek New Testament word *sophron* and its derivatives (variously translated sober, soberly, soberness, sobriety, sober-minded, sobering, right-minded), and which is so often enjoined by Paul and Peter. This "level-headedness," moral and mental balance, antithesis of the fanatical state of [5] mind,[5] comes to us of course exactly in the measure in which [6] we "watch" as well as "pray," [6] or, in other words, allow "the Spirit" to "guide" us "into all the truth"; and departs from us just to the extent to which—like Augustine with the Donatists—we ignore *any* of Christ's great laws and principles. Had Augustine been "sober-minded" enough to unprejudicedly weigh *all* the New Testament says:—

[1] Luke xi. 35. [2] Matt. iv. 5-7. [3] Col. iii. 16.
[4] 2 Peter i. 4. [5] Luke viii. 35; 2 Cor. v. 13. [6] Mark xiv. 38.

(*a*) As to leaving "the commandment of God" and holding "fast the tradition of men,"[1] it might have wholly emanci- [1]
pated him from prescription.

(*b*) As to the rule to "know" men by their "fruit"[2] and [2]
test their "faith" by their "works";[3] as to the direct for- [3]
biddance of physical force in promoting or defending Christ's spiritual Kingdom;[4] and as to *His* method of dealing with [4]
recalcitrants;[5] it would have impelled him to earlier oppose, [5]
with all his influence, the cruel and merciless persecution of his fellow Christians.

(*c*) As to the complete autonomy and independence of each city Ecclesia under the sole Headship of Christ,[6] it would [6]
have convinced him that as a member of one Ecclesia he had absolutely no right to meddle with the affairs of any other.[7] [7]

But if, with Bible in hand, Augustine for a time allowed himself to be dominated by the ecclesiasticism of his age, what shall we say of the myriads of "sheep" who, during the dreary centuries of the great "falling away," had the Scriptures only in dead languages? How different their responsibility from ours![8] [8]

In our own day it is a melancholy thought that, in spite of printed Bibles and of the widely published histories of the great martyr conflict in which our forefathers emancipated their country from papal rule, our land should be the only one to exhibit the spectacle of thousands of ministers violating their solemn pledges to maintain the Protestant faith; repudiating with shame the very name of Protestant; and, as

[1] Mark vii. 3 *seq.*; Gal. i. 13, 14; Col. ii. 8.
[2] Matt. vii. 16. [3] James ii. 18.
[4] Matt. xxvi. 52; John xviii. 36; Luke ix. 54, 55.
[5] Matt. xviii. 17; 1 Cor. v. 2 *seq.*; 2 Tim. ii. 24-26.
[6] Eph. ii. 21, 22; Gal. v. 1; 1 Cor. x. 29.
[7] Had he read 1 Peter iv. 15 he would have been appalled at the bad company in which he found himself. "For let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil-doer, or as a meddler in other men's matters."
[8] Rom. ii. 11 *seq.*; Acts x. 34.

"sacrificing priests," seducing the people again into the idolatries and ghostly superstitions of corrupt Rome.

It is devoutly to be desired that the widespread Romeward drift of the State Church clergy may sound a note of warning to all Evangelical ministers. When we think of the fearful evils that have fastened themselves on the Indian people through the influence of the Brahmanic priestly caste; when we remember that a "high priest" and "chief priests" were the instigators of the crime of crimes; when we recall Christ's scathing denunciations of the "scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites," who made "broad their phylacteries" that they might "outwardly appear righteous unto men," we feel it would rejoice many sober-minded Christians if all true preachers of "the Word" were to wash their hands of complicity with priestcraft by divesting themselves of everything in dress, title and ministerial attitude tending to place them on a different plane from that of their fellow-men and thus to spread the germs of the sacerdotal caste.

With profoundest respect for the high calling of the preacher, we have little doubt that the dropping of a title which is only once used in the Scriptures, and then of God
[1] Himself,[1] together with the abolition of the caste attire and caste term "layman," would produce most beneficial and far-reaching results. It would, in most cases, tend to replace a conventional deference towards an ecclesiastic by a feeling of esteem and love for the genuine "man of God"; to annihilate the distance created by "the cloth" which prevents many a minister gaining the confidence of the strangers he meets; to reveal both to the people and himself the vital difference between the Christian leader and the "priest"; to throw upon congregations the responsibility for spiritual work which they now so complacently pass on to their paid

[1] Ps. cxi. 9.

cleric; and to bring home to the latter, when deprived of factitious aids, that his power for good depends as directly on his preaching and practising "the truth of Christ" as did that of the apostles who never attempted to reinforce it by any ecclesiastical dress or title.

CHAPTER IX

"THE TRIBES OF THE LORD"[1]

148, The symbolic meaning of "twelve". Variety a characteristic of all God's works. 152, God's plan for Israel tribal. 153, The great tribal features of "the new Jerusalem". 154, Tribal variety in heaven. 157, The complete equality of the denominations. 158, The entrancing glories of "the holy city". 161, The city already exists. 166, The ideal was largely realised by the Jerusalem Ecclesia. 169, Relative positions of the Ecclesia and the denominations. 172, Denominations a necessity of existing human nature.

WE come now to consider the practical significance of a symbol which, like the number "seven" embodied in the first act of Ecclesia organisation,[2] seems to have been sown for reaping in after centuries when "the fulness of the time" should develop "variety in unity," and produce distinct tribes or denominations in the Christian community. We have seen that a comparison of the many Old and New Testament mentions of "seven" (with their contexts) clearly shows that the number was used to symbolise completeness.[3]

With all deference to exegetes, we would now suggest that an open-minded comparison of the various Scripture mentions of "twelve" will leave the conviction that it was employed to represent *variety*. And, as the figure for completeness was evidently suggested by the complete seven-day week, so the symbol for variety was probably taken from the twelve months of the year: these successively displaying their differing length of day, temperature, vegetation, etc., as we look abroad in the earth, as well as the monthly changing signs of the zodiac in the heavens above.

[1] Ps. cxxii. 4. [2] Acts vi. 1-6. [3] See p. 67.

A moment's reflection shows that variety and completeness are wholly distinct attributes.

Thus every complete, full-grown tree might conceivably have had identical form and outline, with every leaf precisely alike; but, by variety, what a glory has God superadded to creation! In the vegetable world alone we behold many natural orders, a vast number of genera, an enormously greater number of species, and an extraordinary variety in the size, form and tint of the myriad units these contain.

On the completion of His creation work "God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good". It was throughout instinct with *variety*, and everything was *complete* for its designed end and environment.

Variety, in truth, is so constant a feature of God's handiwork that it is no exaggeration to say there are no two things in His universe exactly alike; that it is the correlate of the yearning for it which He has Himself given us to gratify, and is, in fact, essential to the moral, social and intellectual constitution of intelligent beings; that in all fields of thought, investigation, and effort, wherever there is liberty there is variety of development, and with it the origination of schools of thought, sections and parties;[1] and that such diversity of [1]
view, where it is controlled by the spirit of charity and honourable emulation, directly subserves the interests of truth by evolving phases of it which would otherwise be unrevealed.

Let any parent wishing to permanently impress his children with this thought of the endless variety of God's works make the experiment of offering them five pounds if they will bring him two plant leaves exactly alike. There will be a stampede into the garden; but a long time will elapse before they come back hesitatingly with two or three of the least unlike leaves; and the same result will follow an offer for two exactly similar blades of grass.

[1] In this connection the mere mention of politics or science at once brings to mind the essential diversity of opinion on the innumerable aspects such subjects present.

> The Almighty Maker has throughout
> Discriminated each from each, by strokes
> And touches of His hand, with so much art
> Diversified, that two were never found
> Twins at all points.

When God has made an infant does He not destroy the pattern? Thus:—

"Every individual comes into the world different from every other. There has never been one on earth before just like him. There will never be another his exact duplicate. In gift and disposition, in sensibility and range of power, in ten thousand ways of subtle variation, each is distinguished from his brother. A man is as distinct before God as if God and he were alone in the universe. Therefore he has a unique place and mission. None can do his work for him. His special tone in the organ of existence no other pipe can render. And with this specialisation of function comes individual responsibility. None can answer for him. Every man must bear his own burden, and before the judgment
[1] seat give answer for himself."[1]

The most saintly and mutually devoted wedded pair the world has ever known, still less the different members of their family, never thought nor could think alike on everything; if only because on various things one must necessarily
[2] know more than another.[2] "Come ye yourselves apart into
[3] a solitary place, and rest awhile."[3]

What is the chief charm and glory of a holiday beyond the seas to the jaded worker; or even of a graphically written, vividly illustrated book of travel to the mentally exhausted toiler? Is it not the *change* of occupation, landscape, climate, people, customs, history, traditions, religion, political ideas,
[4] everything almost, which environs him in the foreign land?[4]

[1] *Sunday School Chronicle*, 22nd Oct., 1903.

[2] See Paul's remarks as to the differing views of Christians on certain questions (Rom. xiv. 5, 6; see also 1 Cor. x. 29). [3] Mark vi. 31.

[4] It is something, as *The Spectator* forcibly if not elegantly remarks, "if you only have the gutters in a different place"!

What was the most prominent feature of the great coronation gathering in London in 1902? Was it not the marvellous variety of races, representing the equally diverse lands and climes, of the vast Empire which has been entrusted to our stewardship?

But there are very varied tastes as to variety itself! Some find no charm either in foreign lands or books of travel; and so, other books, communion or debate with friends, the varied forms of physical and mental recreation, games, research, in short an endless list of legitimate alteratives and restoratives (the most efficient of all, shall we say, the Lord's Day "in the Spirit"?) is furnished by a beneficent Providence for exhausted brain and frame.

Could there be a more forcible illustration of the variety of gifts with which God has endued the members of a Christian Ecclesia (and which, alas, are dormant in so many instances to-day[1]) than Paul's figure of the human body and its absolutely differing organs, all nevertheless necessary to the completeness and glory of the man as a whole?[2]

Diverse as the waves, one as the sea.

Amongst the Ecclesias themselves as collective spiritual organisms, the Acts and Epistles show us the same individuality and variety of character which we observe amongst city, county and national communities to-day.

A glimpse of glorious variety is revealed in Christ's words, "In my Father's house are many mansions"; another in the Revised Version rendering of Eph. iii. 15, "every family in heaven and on earth"; another flashes upon us as we think of—

Saints of the early dawn of Christ,
Saints of Imperial Rome,
Saints of the cloistered Middle Age,
Saints of the modern home;
Saints of the soft and sunny East,
Saints of the frozen seas,

[1] 1 Cor. xii. [2] Gen. i. 27.

Saints of the isles that wave their palms
In the fair Antipodes;
Saints of the marts and busy streets,
Saints of the squalid lanes,
Saints of the silent solitudes,
Of the prairies and the plains;
Saints who were wafted to the skies
In the torment robe of flame,
Saints who have graven on men's thoughts
A monumental name;
Come, from the endless peace that spreads
Over the glassy sea;
Come, from the choir with harps of gold,
Harping their melody;
Come, from the home of holiest hope,
Under the altar-throne;
Come, from the depths where the angels see
One Awful Face alone;
Come, from the heights where the Mount of God
Burns like a burnished gem;
Come, from the star-paved terraces
Of the new Jerusalem;
Come, for we fain would hear the notes
Of your sweet celestial hymn,
And we fain would know what look is theirs
Who look on the Seraphim;
Come, for our faith is waxing faint,
And the lamp of love burns low;
Come to these lower heavens, and shine,
That we may see and know;
Come, for the flash of a moment's space,
With your snowy wings outspread,
Oh God-lit cloud of witnesses,
1 Souls of the sainted dead.[1]

It is significant that when God laid the foundations of the Jewish people He did not plan for a homogeneous community, 2 but for "a nation and a company of nations,"[2] *i.e.*, for twelve 3 4 self-governing tribes,[3] "the tribes of the Lord".[4] And what is the most salient feature of Jacob's last words to the twelve patriarchs as founders of the tribes? Is it not their delineation of the wonderful varieties of character[5] which—notwithstanding their national solidarity, the unifying influence of their

[1] Dr. Hatch. [2] Gen. xxxv. 11. [3] Gen. xlix. 16.
[4] Ps. cxxii. 4. [5] Gen. xlix.

thrice yearly gatherings in Zion[1] and of their joint defensive wars—were afterwards to distinguish the tribes: and which, for example, were so vividly revealed in Deborah's picture of their differing attitudes in a supreme national crisis?[2] What is it that at once arrests us in reading Moses' blessings on the twelve communities? The marvellous variety of their fortunes which he prophetically foretold.[3]

Further, God granted twelve sons also to Ishmael, each of whom founded a separate people—"twelve princes according to their nations".[4] The complete individuality of each tribe in Israel was beautifully symbolised by the twelve different gems on the breastplate of the high priest: every jewel representing a tribe borne on his heart to God, when going "in unto the holy place".[5]

Again, in the Revelation, in the entrancing description of "the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,"[6] we find the same symbol employed to exhibit the varied glories of the twelve foundations of its wall. Every stone—jasper, sapphire, chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, sardius, chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase, jacinth or amethyst—bears the name of one of "the twelve apostles of the Lamb". Each of these vast gems as seen by John in his vision apparently underlaid its twelfth (125 miles) of the entire wall of 12,000 *stadia* or furlongs (1,500 miles). Rising from these superb foundations, "the twelve tribes of the children of Israel"—*i.e.*, obviously the tribes or denominations of the spiritual Israel[7]—are apparently represented by the jasper wall and its twelve portals of pearl, each with its *aggelos* or herald bearing a tribal name,[8] at each of the three easterly,

[1] David reigned in Zion over all the Jewish tribes; but when the Christian Ecclesia is restored, "the tribes of the Lord," under "the Son of David," will form a Zion in every city of the world.

[2] Jud. v. 8-23.
[3] Deut. xxxiii.
[4] Gen. xxv. 12-16.
[5] Exod. xxviii. 15-30.
[6] Rev. xxi. 2, 9 *seq.*
[7] Gal. vi. 16; Rom. ix. 6.
[8] Rev. xxi. 12.

northerly, southerly and westerly gates. The spiritual tribes, as in the case of the desert encampment of the twelve earthly
[1] tribes around "the tent of meeting,"[1] are seemingly in touch: one tribe's length of the wall beginning where that of its neighbour ends; the whole city being thereby encompassed by them. Being built on the foundations of the apostles, the tribes were no doubt intended, architecturally speaking, to follow their lines, *i.e.*, to transmit upwardly their varied characteristics.

And so the wall is of jasper, the ancient jewel *of many*
[2] *colours*[2] (though, unlike that gem, the heavenly jasper is "clear as crystal"); each tribal length of the wall being probably of the same tint as the lovely foundation from which it rose!

But these symbolic glories of the spiritual tribes by no means exhaust the wondrous varieties of *character* they are evidently meant to portray. Every tribe is of course composed of many very different families. In Eph. iii. 14, 15, we read of "the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named". Accordingly, in the wall of "twelve thousand furlongs" we recognise variety (12) multiplied a thousand-fold; and thus every furlong in each tribal length of section might, whilst harmonising generally with the glorious design as a whole, exhibit some exquisite feature of its own.

Still further. Whilst this wondrous vision of the new Jerusalem shows us the tribal system, with all the delightful variety of gifts and graces which it fosters and develops, carried over from the old dispensation to the new; in Rev. iv. 4 we behold the same divine principle prominent in heaven

[1] Num. ii.

[2] "It is probable, however, that the jasper of the ancients included the *opal*, which, by its brilliance and play of colour, has always been one of the most attractive of precious stones, and in its choicest variety deserves in the highest degree the description in Rev. xxi. 11" (T. K. Cheyne, *Encyc. Bibl.*, Art. "Jasper").

itself. We there read: "And round about the throne were four and twenty thrones: and upon the thrones I saw four and twenty elders sitting, arrayed in white garments; and on their heads crowns of gold"[1]—symbolising probably the tribes both of the Old Covenant and the New. The second twelve of these—the tribes or denominations of the Israel of grace—seem to have been prefigured by Christ's announcement to the apostles that in the regeneration when the Son of man should sit on the throne of His glory, they also would sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.[2]

In Rev. xii. however, we see the tribal plan or principle of the two dispensations jointly represented by a single twelve. Under the wonderfully suggestive figure of a woman "arrayed with the sun" (emblem of the transcendently glorious dispensation of Christ's "grace and truth") and "the moon under her feet" (the relatively inferior and subjected dispensation[3] of the law with all its hopeless requirements from fallen man), "and upon her head a crown of twelve stars," we may recognise the continuity of the Ecclesia of God under both covenants: the characteristic tribal feature, twelve, passing over unchanged.[4] As Dean Alford remarks: "The whole symbolism points to the Church, the bride of God: and of course, from the circumstances afterwards related, the Old Testament Church, at least at this beginning of the vision".[5]

[1] We cannot but be struck with the honour and glory here conferred by God upon the "elders," the representative rulers in every "Ecclesia of God" (Heb. xii. 22, 23). The idea of *federation* is also evidently embodied. But where is there representation of autocratic rule?

[2] Matt. xix. 28; Rev. xxi. 14. Must not this high function relate to the *spiritual* tribes of Christ's Kingdom? It can scarcely be supposed that the apostles are to judge the patriarchs, prophets, priests and kings, and the dispersed descendants of all the tribes, who have since so completely merged that no Israelite to-day can say to which tribe he belongs.

[3] 2 Cor. iii. 10.

[4] The oneness of the Old and the New Testament Ecclesia is seen again in the grafting of the Gentile branch into the old olive-tree (Rom. xi. 17).

[5] *New Testament for English Readers*. Note to Rev. xii. 1.

Zion, thrice happy place,
Adorned with wondrous grace,
And walls of strength embrace thee round;
In thee our tribes appear,
To pray and praise and hear
The sacred Gospel's joyful sound.[1]

The infinite variety of character, knowledge and experience which "the communion of saints" of every age, race and clime with each other and, above all, with their glorious Saviour King—illimitable and eternal SOURCE of all gifts and graces—will contribute to the joy of the redeemed, seems clearly indicated in the words: "And I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on the mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty and four thousand, having his name, and the name of his Father, written on their foreheads".[2]

Here we have the symbol for variety (12) *multiplied by itself* a thousand-fold. This interpretation seems borne out by another passage in the Revelation where 144,000 "servants of our God" sealed "on their foreheads" are represented as composed of 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes,[3] apparently indicating the great tribal or generic varieties of character, and in each tribe specific varieties a thousand times twelve! Had it been intended to indicate not a vast *variety* but merely a vast *number*, the Greek figure often used for the latter, *murias*, would doubtless have been employed, as elsewhere in the New Testament—"The Lord came with ten thousands" (Jude v. 14); "Twice ten thousand times ten thousand" (Rev. ix. 16).

Although we can only faintly imagine the character and attributes of the higher order of intelligences, "the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places," "the angels," the "seraphim" and "cherubim" of whom Scripture speaks; what we do know seems to indicate that, amongst them also, the same law of vast, limitless, humanly inconceivable variety everywhere prevails.

In the "new heaven and new earth" of Rev. xxi. we find

[1] Watts. [2] Rev. xiv. 1. [3] Rev. vii. 4 *seq.*

the same negation of uniformity: "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them".[1] 1

The view that the great tribal features of the new Jerusalem point to the various Christian denominations is in no way shaken by the fact that, amongst the many nations in the world, there are many more than twelve Christian denominations: if there is variety in twelve, there is obviously more variety in a still larger number. The precision of the number is thus of no consequence *if the underlying idea of the symbol is preserved.*[2] 2

Another aspect of the heavenly vision may here be thoughtfully considered. The salient feature of the tribal gates, far from indicating variety, points directly to similarity. We are told that "each one of the several gates was of one pearl". Following the safe rule of searching for the principle or truth underlying the surface meaning of a symbol, we remember that the great function of the gates is that of a *means of access* to the holy city ("they shall bring the glory and the honour of the nations into it"). Do not the twelve lovely, but identical, pearly gates, therefore, teach us the important truth that, along with delightful variety of character, all the tribes have one attribute in common—that of perfect equality of status and function as approaches or portals to the new Jerusalem?

And so our various English denominations—Anglican, Baptist, Congregationalist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Salvation Army, and all other on the one foundation—are, in God's sight, on the same equal footing as were the twelve tribes encamped

[1] Rev. xxi. 3.

[2] A comparison of the following records seems to point to the *essential symbolism* of the number. In the list of the twelve patriarchs (Jacob's sons) are the names of Levi and Joseph (Gen. xxxv. 23-26). In the list of the twelve tribes marshalled around the tent of meeting Levi's and Joseph's names are substituted by those of Ephraim and Manasseh (Num. ii.). In the list of the twelve tribes represented as having been "sealed," Ephraim's and Dan's names are replaced by those of Levi and Joseph.

around the tent of meeting;[1] the twelve princes around their leader on the march to and conquest of the promised land;[2] and, last not least, the antitypes of these, "the twelve apostles of the Lamb".[3] The *aggelos* or messenger at each gate bears his tribal name (Rev. xxi. 12; see also Rev. iii. 12). As every Christian denomination has its missionary society, these heralds may prefigure the *missionaries* of the denominations, proclaiming to all nations the glad tidings of eternal life in Christ. "And I saw another angel flying in mid heaven, having an eternal gospel to proclaim unto them that dwell on the earth, and unto every nation and tribe and tongue and people" (Rev. xiv. 6).

The analogy betwixt the position of Moses, surrounded by the twelve princes leading Israel's tribes towards the land of promise, and that of Christ in the midst of the twelve apostles, leaders of the spiritual tribes[4] in the Kingdom of God, was foreshadowed in Moses' prophetic words[5] cited by Peter in the temple:[6] "A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me; to him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you".

In the description of the new Jerusalem we have a glimpse of a pure and lovely scene which reveals in ideal perfectness those *rus in urbe* features, lacking which we cannot imagine even an earthly city either beautiful or complete.

"And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the midst of the street thereof. And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."[7]

[1] Num. ii., vii.
[2] Num. i. 4-16; xxxiv. 18-29; Josh. ix. 15, 18, 21.
[3] Matt. xxiii. 8.; xix. 28.
[4] Rev. xxi. 12-14.
[5] Deut. xviii. 15.
[6] Acts iii. 22.
[7] Rev. xxii. 1, 2. See also Ezek. xlvii. 12.

Remembering that "man shall not live by bread alone,"[1] we see in the simple words "bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month," a picture, not merely of the celestial food for the body (which earth's wondrous variety of temperate and tropical fruits so vividly suggests); and not only of that higher food for the mind and the soul which springs from the constant blissful realisation of God's redeeming grace in Christ, from the ceaseless study of His illimitably varied works,[2] and from an endless succession of rapturous discoveries of the glories of His character; but also of that "meat" which is "to do" His "will" and "to accomplish his work"[3]; for He who said "My Father worketh even until now, and I work" tells us through His messenger that "his servants shall do him service".[4] The differing tribes or denominations may "do him service" and "bear much fruit" each in its own distinctive way. Amongst these, "pastors and teachers" have the joyous privilege of ministering to Him, by ministering to His people, the various fruits of "the tree of life"; for how many could testify how wondrously the thoughts of men "mighty in the Scriptures"[5] have inspired them to produce the varied "fruit of the Spirit" in their daily life!

Let us take one more glance at the "new Jerusalem". Its symmetry is complete. It "lieth foursquare," "the length thereof" being "as great as the breadth,"[6] and the whole circumference 12,000 stadia or furlongs.

But what is intended to be conveyed by the statement that

[1] Matt. iv. 4. [2] Ps. cxi. 2, 3, 4. [3] John iv. 34. Rev. xxii. 3. [5] Acts xviii. 24.

[6] Rev. xxi. 16. It is not stated that the length is as great as the *height:* that dimension being given in the next verse. The word "equal" therefore in v. 16 doubtless means that the city is a *perfect* square: its length at every point being uniform, its breadth unvarying, and its height everywhere the same. If it had varied in its length, had been of different widths and of unequal heights, there would obviously have been inequality in the relative positions of the tribes. V. 16 cannot depict the city as high as it was long and broad, for that would have made it many thousand times higher than its wall!

the wall, *i.e.*, no doubt the *height* of the wall, is 144 (12 × 12) cubits? We know that the two essential attributes of all noble buildings, and therefore *a fortiori* of such an indescribably magnificent and commanding wall, are *strength* and *beauty;* and that the genius of the architect lies in blending these great features harmoniously together. We read that a view of the earthly Jerusalem impelled the royal Psalmist to exclaim: "Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount
[1] Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King".[1] May it be that the wall of "the city which hath the founda-
[2] tions, whose architect and maker is God,"[2] has, throughout, such an array of mighty and varied defences, such a variety of surpassingly beautiful features, that the angel portraying the dazzling spectacle can only tell human imaginations that the symbols for these (12 and 12) are multiplied—divinely blended —into each other?

Of the city within, we read that "the glory of God did lighten it and the lamp thereof is the Lamb". Thus the tribal wall of jasper, "clear as crystal" and of many exquisite
[3] tints, rays out Christ's divine light and beauty upon the world.[3] Transmitting His loveliness by Christlike words and deeds of
[4] self-sacrifice and compassion[4] it attracts to Him "a great
[5] multitude which no man could number".[5] These, having "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of
[6] the Lamb,"[6] have "the right to come to the tree of life, and
[7] may enter in by the gates into the city".[7] So the record adds: "the nations shall walk amidst the light thereof: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory into it". Within the heavenly walls "the leaves of the tree," for "the healing of the nations," bring divine remedies to bear upon the varied physical, mental and moral disorders which past sin and

[1] Ps. xlviii. 2. [2] Heb. xi. 10.

[3] Every denomination's witness for Christ has its own hue and complexion, but He—"the light of the world"—shines through them all.

[4] John xvii. 22, 23. [5] Rev. vii. 9.

[6] Rev. vii. 14. [7] Rev. xxii. 14.

alienation from God had inflicted upon body, mind and soul. The remarkable expression "the street of the city"[1] seems, as Jowett finely suggests, to point to the ideal sinless, every-day, social and business life. [1]

What then is the great practical lesson conveyed by the supernal beauty and glory of the new Jerusalem?

Certainly we shall greatly err if we regard the heavenly vision *only* as a picture of a holy city that is *to come*, after "the first heaven and the first earth are passed away". We cannot overlook the significance of the thrice-employed phrase "coming down," "cometh down" out of heaven[2] as something *now in process*, on the way, as yet incomplete. "In my Father's house are many mansions. . . . I go to prepare a place for you."[3] [2] [3]

Is not the inspired writer of the Revelation really speaking *in the present as well as future tense* of the new Jerusalem, and referring both to the Ecclesia Militant and the Ecclesia Triumphant? Does he not assume that the spiritual Zion began with the laying of its foundations—"the twelve apostles of the Lamb"—at Pentecost, and that, through the ever-increasing holy influences "coming down out of heaven from God" upon it, the glorious structure will in His "set time" be complete?[4] Looking forward through the vista of the Christian centuries, he beholds the grandest development in its history—"they shall bring the glory and the honour of the nations into it"; and "the leaves" of "the tree of life" shall be "for the healing of the nations". This view seems to be supported by a whole galaxy of prophecies of the spiritual Israel:— [4]

"Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the peoples: but the Lord shall

[1] Rev. xxi. 21. [2] Rev. iii. 12; xxi. 2, 10.
[3] John xiv. 2. [4] Rev. xxi. 14; Eph. ii. 10; 1 Peter ii. 4, 5, 6.

arise upon thee, and his glory be seen upon thee. And nations shall come to thy light and kings to the brightness of
[1] thy rising." [1]

"All they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee The city of
[2] the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel." [2]

"And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in
[3] this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts." [3]

"Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the nations, and set up my ensign to the peoples: and they shall bring thy sons in their bosom, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their faces to the earth, and lick the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord, and they that wait for me shall not be
[4] ashamed." [4]

"Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad for her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn over her: that ye may suck and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the nations like an overflowing stream, and ye shall suck *thereof;* ye shall be borne upon the side, and shall be dandled upon the knees. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will
[5] I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem." [5]

[1] Isa. lx. 1, 2, 3. [2] Isa. lx. 14.
[3] Hag. ii. 7, 8, 9. [4] Isa. xlix. 22, 23.
[5] Isa. lxvi. 10-13. (That Isa. liv. refers to the Christian Ecclesia is evident from the preceding and succeeding chapters.)

"For the Lord hath built up Zion,
He hath appeared in his glory;
He hath regarded the prayer of the destitute,
And hath not despised their prayer. . . .
For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary;
From heaven did the Lord behold the earth;
To hear the sighing of the prisoner;
To loose those that are appointed to death;
That men may declare the name of the Lord in Zion,
And his praise in Jerusalem;
When the peoples are gathered together,
And the kingdoms, to serve the Lord."[1] 1

In reading these words, together with the remarkable statement in v. 18—

"This shall be written for the generation to come:
And a people which shall be created shall praise the Lord," we are being winged across the two dispensations to the new Jerusalem, the glorious consummation of the Redeemer's work.

That the new Jerusalem *now exists* is made clear by the following passages:—

"The Jerusalem that is above is free, which is our mother" (Gal. iv. 26).

"He hath prepared for them a city" (Heb. xi. 16).

"For our citizenship is in heaven" (Phil. iii. 20).

"To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise" (Luke xxiii. 43).

"He" (Paul) "was caught up into Paradise and heard unspeakable words" (2 Cor. xii. 4).

"The tree of life which is in the Paradise of God" (Rev. ii. 7).

"Ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God" (Eph. ii. 19).

"Ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and Ecclesia of the first-born

[1] Ps. cii. 16-22.

who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better than *that* of Abel" (Heb. xii. 22 *seq.*).

If therefore we *are* come unto Mount Zion; if our citizenship *is* in heaven; if, having died with Christ, we *are* raised together with Him; if, like Him, we have, after our resurrection, remained for a brief space on earth for our good and that of our fellow-men and for the glory of the Father—our
[1] true life, for the moment, being "hid with Christ in God"[1] —is it not our manifest duty and privilege to make our citizenship of Zion visible to one another and to the world by our *fellowship* upon earth? Let us then stimulate our efforts to that end by never losing sight of the fact that the holy city
[2] now exists, that its citizens are not only those in heaven[2] but those on earth "who are written in the Lamb's book of life"; that, in other words, the heavenly and the earthly company are one.

But have not the words "coming down out of heaven from
[3] God," an *immediately practical* meaning? In a previous section[3] evidence was adduced to show that *every apostolic community is*

[1] Col. iii. 3.

[2] They stand, those halls of Zion,
All jubilant with song,
And bright with many an angel,
And all the martyr throng.
The PRINCE is ever in them,
The daylight is serene,
The pastures of the blessed
Are decked in glorious sheen.

There is the throne of David;
And there, from care released,
The shout of them that triumph,
The song of them that feast:
And they, who with their LEADER
Have conquered in the fight,
For ever and for ever
Are clad in robes of white.

Canto from Bernard of Cluny, trans. by J. M. Neale.

[3] See p. 31.

designed to be a Zion or spiritual mirror of the new Jerusalem. One or two New Testament figures may refresh the memory on this point. We know that the Ecclesia Universal is the body of Christ;[1] but every Ecclesia Local is also characterised as His body.[2] Similarly both the Ecclesia Universal and the Ecclesia Local have one designation—"the Ecclesia of God".[3] Again, the Ecclesia Universal is "the house of God";[4] so also is the Ecclesia Local.[5]

The same conception reappears in the use of the words temple[6] and flock.[7]

In the following passages the two Ecclesias are placed side by side as if to emphasise the parallelism. In 1 Cor. xii. 27 we see the Ecclesia Local and in v. 28 the Ecclesia Universal; in Eph. ii. 19, 20 the Ecclesia Universal appears, and in vv. 21, 22 the Ecclesia Local.

If, then, to go back to the original metaphor, the view be correct that all Christian Ecclesias should regard themselves as microcosms of "the holy city" and realise that their one practical problem is how—like its transcendently glorious wall—to ray out the virtues, the graces, the loveliness of Christ, and thus attract sinners to His cross; we may well ask, what could be more beautiful than that union of His people for which, on the eve of Calvary, He four times prayed: the fourth time pleading "that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me"?[8]

Can we doubt that the fulfilment of that prayer will be the "coming down out of heaven from God" of a spiritual beauty and glory upon the Ecclesias such as the world has not seen since the days of the Jerusalem community? Then, indeed, will they be cities set upon hills that cannot be hid, so letting their light shine before men, that they may see

[1] Eph. i. 22, 23. [2] 1 Cor. xii. 27. [3] Matt. xvi. 18; 1 Cor. i. 2.
[4] 1 Peter iv. 17. [5] 1 Tim. iii. 15. [6] Rev. iii. 12; Eph. ii. 21, 22.
[7] John x. 16; Acts xx. 28. [8] John xvii. 23.

their good works, and glorify their Father who is in heaven.[1] Then will every Ecclesia become an exquisite, though earthly, miniature of "the bride, the wife of the Lamb,"[2] "purchased with his own blood"[3] walking with Him "in white,"[4] lovely beyond compare;[5] because "the beauty of the Lord our God" will be upon them.[6] For Christ "loved the Ecclesia, and gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the Ecclesia to himself a glorious *Ecclesia*, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish".[7]

John tells us in his sublime vision of the new Jerusalem: "I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God the Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple thereof".[8]

And if "the Ecclesia of God,"[9] in each city, was designed to be "a holy temple in the Lord,"[10] the "dwelling-place" of God,[11] "the body of Christ,"[12] "a royal priesthood"[13] of "brethren" presenting their "bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God," as their "reasonable service";[14] what a responsibility lies on the denominations in every place to unite, as tribes in the spiritual Zion, to restore "the temple of God,"[15] "the body of Christ," and by their self-sacrifice, "love, joy, peace," make a glorious exhibit of the Christ life to "them that are without"!

We all know how largely this ideal was realised by the first Ecclesia—born, as it was, *in union*—when "they were all together in one place . . . and all that believed

[1] Matt. v. 14, 15, 16. [2] Rev. xix. 7; xxi. 2, 9; Isa. liv. 5.
[3] Acts xx. 28. [4] Rev. iii. 4. [5] Isa. liv. 11, 12, 13, 14.
[6] Ps. xc. 17. [7] Eph. v. 25, 26, 27. [8] Rev. xxi. 22.
[9] 2 Cor. i. 1. [10] Eph. ii. 21.
[11] Ps. lxxvi. 2; Lev. xxvi. 12; Ezek. xxxvii. 26-28.
[12] 1 Cor. xii. 27. [13] 1 Peter ii. 9.
[14] Rom. xii. 1. [15] 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17.

were together".[1] Every thoughtful Christian who has read [1]
and re-read (in the early chapters of the Acts) the idyllic story
of the rise and growth of that "new Jerusalem"; of its
solemn waiting for the baptism of the Spirit promised by its
King and Head; of the wondrous gift of tongues through
which it proclaimed to Jews from every nation the news of
eternal life in Christ; of its practical demonstration of that
life in deeds of brotherly love and self-denial; of its steadfast
devotion to its ascended Lord; of its perfect discipline and
unity of purpose under the guidance of the twelve; of its
leaders' firm, fearless and repeated refusal to obey the law of
man where it infringed the law of God;[2] of the Christlike [2]
miracles which were God's seal upon its work; of the mul-
titude of converts who joined its ranks from both priests
and people; of its marvellous increase of spiritual power
after every internal and external attack from its deadly foe;
of the dying prayer for his enemies of its protomartyr
Stephen; and of the unanimous peaceful settlement of its
extraordinarily divisive controversy; must feel a profound
yearning for the restoration of the primal glories of the
Christian Zion.

As, under the Old Covenant, the first temple was swept
away[3] by the betrayal of the trust committed to Israel, so our [3]
1,800 years of ecclesiasticism have taken away "the temple of
God,"[4] "the Ecclesia of God,"[5] "the body of Christ,"[6] the [4 5 6]
city community[7] organised by Christ's apostles, and have left [7]
us only the separate synagogues[8] of the various tribes or [8]
denominations! "Thy holy cities are become a wilderness,
Zion is become a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation."[9] [9]

The wondrous blessing reaped by the first Christian com-
munity was, we know, in great part due to its members'
implicit obedience to the inspired teaching and guidance

[1] Acts ii. 1, 44. [2] See note to p. 128. [3] 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15-19.
[4] 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17. [5] 1 Cor. i. 2. [6] 1 Cor. xii. 27.
[7] Rev. i. 11. [8] James ii. 2. [9] Isa. lxiv. 10.

(spiritual, governmental and other) of the apostles as Christ's
[1] witnesses and the interpreters of His mind and will.[1] But so complete was the falling away from that attitude that, long ere the first millennium closed, the apostolic Ecclesia, as such, had entirely vanished from the world. Shall the second one pass before our loyalty to the true "successors of the apostles" (*i.e.*, the gospels and epistles) impels us to restore their governmental principles and their spirit of unity? Through many long centuries we have, as dissevered limbs, disloyally perpetuated these schisms in the body of our King
[2] and Head.[2]

Shall every denomination, then, in every city where the primitive Gospel is cherished and proclaimed, now begin a federation movement by confessing before God our own and
[3] our fathers' sin in this matter?[3] We read that at the rebuilding of the temple, on a scale far inferior to the first, "the old men that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud
[4] voice".[4] But with printed Bibles everywhere, and with civil and religious liberties unknown to first century Christians, the restoration of "the Ecclesia of God" should secure an even greater outpouring of spiritual power and glory, of "love and good works," than that which fell on the "new Jerusalem" at the first.

"For thus saith the Lord of hosts: Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desirable things of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace,
[5] saith the Lord of hosts."[5]

[1] John xv. 27; Acts ii. 42; iv. 35; vi. 2-6; x. 41. [2] 1 Cor. xii. 25.
[3] Dan. ix. 8 *seq.* [4] Ez. iii. 12. [5] Hag. ii. 6-9.

If, however, we would grapple successfully with the problem of Christian reunion, we must keep constantly before us the essential features of the constitution which the apostolic organisation exhibited so clearly in embryo, *viz.*: (*a*) That it is a city[1] federation of all denominations of members [1] of "the body of Christ" under Him as sovereign Head; (*b*) that it has thus a definite, local, self-limiting constituency; (*c*) that it has, in addition to the *separate* activities of its independent denominations, numerous *joint* works of faith and labours of love, conducted by departmental bodies so elected as to give every section of opinion equitable representation upon each; (*d*) that it provides a referendum council to deal with all Christian emergency questions arising outside the departmental and the denominational spheres.

It is especially necessary to apprehend the relation to each other of "the Ecclesia of God" and its denominations or spiritual tribes. In previous pages we have seen that both institutions are divinely ordained. We have found the plainest apostolic evidence as to the local sphere and area of the Ecclesia itself; but as regards the *tribes*, although the New Testament associates them with the latter, both at its foundation and ultimate heavenly goal,[2] yet, doubtless for the [2] reason considered in Chapter VII.,[3] it defines nothing about [3] their sphere or area of operations.

In great salient characteristics, however, there is a remarkable and obviously designed analogy between the tribes of the Old Covenant and the spiritual denominations of the New. In the former we see variety of tribal sphere, administration, sentiment and tradition developed by the self-government conferred in each case,[4] and evidently with that [4] object, by God. The scheme of the Christian Zion similarly gives measureless scope for the development of tribal variety:

[1] *i.e.*, "city" in the usual New Testament sense, *viz.*, a town, or other island of population, or local government unit (see p. 26).

[2] "Twelve": Luke vi. 13; Matt. xix. 28; Rev. xxi. 10-14.

[3] P. 109 *seq.*

[4] Gen. xlix. 16.

from the complete self-rule, for example, of the local Congregational or Baptist Church, to the Episcopal system of ex-
1 tensive dioceses largely under the supervision of single men.[1]

In the land of Israel every tribe was located in a definite county area: most of them therefore at such a distance from Jerusalem, the national centre (God's dwelling-place in Zion), that every male had to be enjoined to appear before Him
2 thrice yearly in the temple.[2] Here we see how greatly the spiritual organisation transcends that of "Israel after the flesh". Under the New Covenant the tribes, not now segregated in the far-apart counties of a country and having their joint and only temple in Jerusalem, but everywhere living and mingling together, may institute a spiritual Zion in any town or village on the globe where they have sufficient
3 numbers to form the community.[3] Thus the world is the country of the Ecclesia and its denominations; and every city in it may be made a Jerusalem.

Further, there can be no legitimate barrier in the constitutions of Evangelical denominations having *national* organisations to prevent them federating with each other *locally in Ecclesia spheres* upon matters outside the denominational province.

Nay! since the tribes must remain Zion-less without the Ecclesia, is it not their duty and privilege to foster the closest interdenominational relationships in every Ecclesia area?

Although the self-government consideration already adduced sufficiently accounts for the fact that no directions are discoverable in the Old Testament as to the internal administration of the tribes, we may reasonably conclude that
4 Moses' markedly democratic procedure[4] suggested the

[1] "And there are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord. And there are diversities of workings, but the same God, who worketh all things in all" (1 Cor. xii. 5, 6).

[2] Deut. xvi. 16.

[3] "The hour cometh when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father" (John iv. 21).

[4] See p. 51.

principles not only of the national government but (in various local forms) of that also of the tribes.

Similarly, the great representative principles, so justly and wisely embodied in the constitution of the apostolic Ecclesia, may well form a standard for the internal legislation and administration of the affairs of its constituent "tribes" or denominations, and thus a security also for the rights and privileges of their individual members. But, outside the personal liberty and responsibility to God alone which is the inalienable prerogative[1] of all the "brethren" of Christ,[2] it is clear, from the entire absence of direction, that every tribe has absolute *carte blanche* as regards its internal rule and governmental arrangements. From this it obviously follows that the sphere of the Ecclesia begins where that of the denominations ends. Its great mission is thus to bring together these dissevered limbs of the body of Christ in order that, to use His own words, "they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me".[3] From that viewpoint we plainly see the meaning of the words: "The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob".[4] The glory of Zion was its temple, which pointed to Christ,[5] and by which He then declared symbolically, as afterwards in person, "No one cometh unto the Father but by me".[6] And thus as, in Christ, Zion was the meeting-place of the tribes with God and each other,[7] so in each city "the Ecclesia of God" as "the temple of God"[8] and "the body of Christ"[9] is, through Him its King and Head, designed to be the meeting-place of His spiritual tribes or denominations with God and each other.

Can we doubt that such union of His members "in

[1] Gal. ii. 4, 5; Rom. xiv. 4.
[2] Heb. ii. 11, 12, 17.
[3] John xvii. 23.
[4] Ps. lxxxvii. 2.
[5] John ii. 19-21.
[6] John xiv. 6.
[7] Ps. cxxii. 1-4.
[8] 1 Cor. iii. 17.
[9] 1 Cor. xii. 27.

Zion" would glorify our Father in heaven far more than their present separatism dishonours Him and cripples their influence and power for good to their fellow-
[1] men?[1]

We sometimes hear the wish expressed that the denominations were abolished. But is not this to forget that a beneficent Creator has made "every family in heaven and on
[2] earth"[2] to differ? Christ's words to John in reply to his statement—"Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy
[3] name: and we forbade him, because he followed not us"[3] —plainly tell us there is room in His vineyard for different types of labourers, and also clearly justify the free-lance evangelist's resolve to work on his own lines. John records further words of Christ which must have enlarged his horizon: "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and they shall
[4] become one flock, one shepherd".[4]

On this Dean Alford pointedly observes:—

"The *one flock* is remarkable—not *one fold*, as characteristically, but erroneously, rendered in the Authorised Version —not ONE FOLD, but ONE FLOCK; not one exclusive enclosure of an outward church, but one flock, all knowing the one Shepherd and known of Him".

If, however, by some procrustean act, a human instead of a divine union were brought about between the denominations, and every tribe was stripped of its distinguishing characteristics, all being merged in one vast body, what a loss there would be of the rich and varied individuality of each; what a dreary uniformity would result; what a huge

[1] Col. iii. 13-15. When the members are clearly convinced that they constitute "one body," then doubtless will be fulfilled the prediction, "Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim" (Isa. xi. 13).

[2] Eph. iii. 15. [3] Mark xi. 38. [4] John x. 16.

power-loving hierarchy would be erected for every liberty-loving Christian to resist![1] 1

Moreover, metaphorically speaking, would it not be to clothe all the picturesque Oriental races in Western dress? And would it last? Would there not be a rapid reversion to type? Is it not a fact that some men, by mental constitu-

[1] All experience shows (*a*) that when a denominational Church has a monopoly of a locality, uninfluenced by emulation, it tends to lose its spiritual life and power, (*b*) that the more a denomination centralises its government the more it parts with its members' initiative, enterprise and wholesome control of its policy.

Some decades ago one of the Scottish Presbyterian denominations discovered that its sleeping Churches were mostly those which were in sole possession of their districts! There was thus ground to fear that if the prolonged movement for amalgamating the Free Church and United Presbyterian denominations ultimately accomplished its object, it would necessarily multiply the number of these monopoly Churches and also concurrently increase the unmanageableness of the central governing body. What has since transpired of the practical results of merging the two organisations indicates that the real hope for the maximum spiritual life and power for good of the United Free Church lies in its decentralisation: in other words, in its loyal and fearless adoption of the great principles of *New Testament* Presbyterianism (see p. 48 *seq.*).

For outsiders it is difficult to understand why—throughout the whole course of the long, delicate and difficult negotiations necessary to compass the union of the two Presbyterian bodies—those who led the Free Church Assembly and were the promoters of its union movement do not appear to have considered the desirability of asking the *membership* of the denomination to declare by a "Yes" or "No" vote whether they approved this momentous *constitutional* change. Only the kirk sessions, presbyteries and synods elected for ordinary everyday matters, were consulted on the question. In presence of the troubles that have resulted, it would be ungenerous to say more than to again enforce the moral (*a*) That both the local and central departments of a denomination should be directly and proportionally elected by the constituency (see p. 183 *seq.*), which would thereby give its mandate on all departmental policies, (*b*) that all extraordinary questions arising outside the departments should be submitted directly to the members through a plebiscite or referendum vote.

The old-time builders of "a city and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven," in order, by such vast symbol of their power, to make themselves a name which would overawe and terrorise every freedom-loving pioneer who, knowingly or unconsciously, was fulfilling God's command to "replenish the earth" (Gen. ix. 1), must have been a politico-religious hierarchy (Gen. xi. 4). And the overthrow of the scheme by so serious a measure as the confusion of tongues indicates the disasters to mankind which God foresaw the tyrannous monopoly would bring about.

tion, *must* be Congregationalists or Baptists; and that others are simply miserable in an atmosphere where all things are not done with stately formality, on Anglican lines? As to ask these questions is to answer them, they may be dismissed with the following suggestive incident. At an interview granted by him in Rome to the leaders of the various Protestant bodies who were conducting evangelisation work in Italy, the late King Humbert seemed much perplexed with the many denominations. But on the Waldensian representative explaining to him that they severally represented the infantry, cavalry, artillery and engineers of Christ's army, he at once perceived the simile and expressed his gratification
1 with their beneficent labours.[1]

It must, notwithstanding all such considerations, be freely admitted that denominationalism may become a blight rather than a blessing when there is splitting up into minor bodies simply through *feeling* instead of deep conviction of *principle;* or when any tribe acts without regard to the well-being of the others, as, for example, when two or three churches of different evangelical denominations plant themselves in a locality which has barely resources enough to sustain *one* in healthy life and growth. As that situation actually exists in various districts, the obvious remedy for it is not the obliteration of denominationalism, but the settlement of every local case in a spirit of large-minded charity, on the principle of "give and take". Surely Christians are as capable of such action as are clear-headed men of the world and rivals in business, when their interests overlap to the injury of everybody concerned.

With the formation of an Ecclesia in each centre of population, the "brotherly love" and Christian public opinion

[1] Even if all differing views on Church government and other points disappeared, the various gifts—and therefore functions for the common good—developed by the denominations would alone make them necessary. A Zion can no more dispense with any distinctive God-given graces than can a family, a city, a Parliament or a State.

created throughout the country would very soon dispose of these and all other interdenominational difficulties.

And if, by mutual agreement of this kind, the church of some one denomination was placed in charge of a given thinly peopled district, would not its governing body show every consideration for the feelings and convictions of other Christians in non-essential matters, and offer all the rights and privileges of membership of the Church to Christians of other persuasions, with the one exception of speaking or voting on its distinctively denominational matters—a power which indeed their own good taste would not permit them to receive or exercise? In this way a spirit of charity would be generated which would greatly stimulate the mental outlook, sympathy, and general spiritual life and power for good of the one church of its district.

Without doubt, in this and other interdenominational matters, the "brotherly love" which would pervade the membership of the Ecclesias would constrain each tribe, by a true and large-hearted comity, to carry every needed change and at the same time to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace".[1]

[1] Eph. iv. 3.

CHAPTER X

THE EVILS OF SEPARATISM AND THE REMEDY

176, Much modern Church life unsatisfactory. 177, Many good men weary of it. 178, Most Church members out of work. A suggestion to harness them. 181, Loosely administered theological colleges. 182, Hierarchically governed missionary and other organisations. 183, The denominations and their central administration. 184, Tribal separatism responsible for fearful evils. 187, Prostitution to political party. 192, Municipal misrule. 193, Christians and burning questions. 196, Are we open to the charge of hypocrisy? 198, A discreditable situation. 203, The decadence of the nation. 209, Highly reassuring signs. 213, Some things which union would achieve. Anti-demoralisation. 216, Education. 218, Church and Sunday school attendance. 219, Children's services. Missionary and evangelisation work. 221, The defence of truth. 222, Taking the initiative. 223, Peace-making. 224, Christian marriage. 226, Help for struggling causes. 227, Charity organisation. Christian engineering. 229, A Christian exchange. 230, A Christian hive. 231, Christ or sect and party? 232, Union would not touch a slate on a denominational roof. 233, It can be achieved by faith in God and an unswerving loyalty to His Word.

OUR churches, and their auxiliary agencies, are of unspeakable value to mankind as organisations of believers to whose human instrumentality almost all living Christians directly or indirectly owe their salvation by Christ.

Yet, whilst thankfully knowing that in every city to-day lives of a high Christian type are to be found, we cannot but feel that their number among our Church members is lamentably small; that Church life in the present day fails in multitudes of cases to develop practically the Christ life; and that the self-denial of the average Church member, not only in relation to personal habits and to urgent missionary and

other claims, but as regards his individual efforts for the conversion of his neighbour, is a far feebler force than it might and ought to be.

We are all again only too familiar with instances of valuable Church members—wearied beyond expression with the village narrowness and littleness of their Church environment, and feeling that it afforded neither scope for their aspirations nor a field for their powers—quietly investing their sympathies and energies in outside philanthropic or even political movements, and contenting themselves with the merest nominal membership of their churches.[1] And thus, many of our advanced Christian thinkers and reformers do not dream of submitting their ideas and schemes to local church bodies: they feel there would be no horizon for them in these little sectional gatherings. They make for the press or the magazines, where they have a coign of vantage and some hope of an adequate hearing for their views. But if, in every locality, Christians were federated and came together on perfectly equal terms to discuss practical suggestions of all kinds for the spiritual regeneration and social and intellectual elevation of their fellow-men, our best men of every Church would be powerfully attracted. Their matured proposals would be sympathetically discussed and weighed, and, if found to be of real value, might be subsequently carried in the city or the State by the united action of all the Christian communities.

Another type of member we know who, saddened if not embittered by quarrels which they have witnessed in their

[1] In the management of most business concerns it is a wise rule for old men to get out of the way of the young. Those Christians who (like the Levites under the Law, see p. 106 *note*) could retire from active life when they have acquired a ripe judgment, enlarged views and wide and deep sympathies, would be of the utmost value to the cause of Christ. Obviously, therefore, every inducement, in the shape of a fit arena, should be offered to such men by the world's most important organisation.

congregations, and rendered hopeless by the spectacle of factions formed, and disputes of heated partisans suppressed but not healed, have withdrawn entirely from their churches, and either connected themselves with other denominations, started undenominational enterprises of their own, plunged exclusively into ragged school, mission, or other free-lance work, or, swinging off at various tangents, have immersed themselves in pleasure worship, or other forms of mammon service.

It is true that, in many cases, either the deeply Christian spirit or strong personality of the minister has averted unhappy developments, and maintained a peaceful situation; but, with the separatist-mind so frequently prevailing in both leader and people, how difficult and perplexing is the [1] task often found to be![1]

In numerous churches there is a serious failure of organisation in the fact that many of the "able-bodied" members are allowed to remain permanently "out of work". But if an apostolic Ecclesia existed in every centre of population, its salient administrative feature, the *ad hoc* proportional election of departmental bodies by the members, would be sure to be copied by the churches, to their great practical advantage. In average sized congregations a considerable number of committees might be periodically elected; the [2] various sets of candidates[2] issuing addresses declaring their objects and policies, and those elected submitting annual reports of their work. Thus the interest of every member would be enlisted by one or other of the committees; his special gift would thereby be utilised; and so, virtually, the

[1] A member of one of the denominations on being asked how many of its churches in his large town had been continuously free from dispeace throughout his thirty years' experience replied, after a little thought: "None but one, and of that one I have no knowledge".

[2] Influenced by a laudable ambition. See 1 Tim. iii. 1.

whole membership would be got into harness.[1] In numerous [1]
cases there would result a solid gain in other directions. If, for example, the members elected the ablest men and women interested in Sunday school work as a Sunday School Committee, it would not only end many an unhappy and irritating *imperium in imperio*, but, by lifting the school to a higher status in Church estimation, would probably be the means of securing many teacher and scholar recruits.

If, in every church, a "Scriptural Giving Committee" were formed, whose duty it was to educate themselves and every member of their community into the principle and practice of Sabbath storing for God, enjoined by Paul[2] (a [2]
task from which ministers naturally shrink as seeming to be prompted by personal ends), the results would be incalculably beneficial to Christians and the world.

In the larger churches a Pastors' Committee (to assist the pastor as lieutenants in his special work), a Praise (*i.e.*, Choir) Committee, a Foreign Missionary Committee, a District Evangelisation Committee, a Dorcas Committee, a Temperance and a Band of Hope Committee, a Christian Endeavour Committee, a Reading Room and Publication Committee, a Fabric Committee (who might also act as hosts to strangers entering the church), a Finance Committee, an Audit Committee, an Elections Committee, a Conciliation and Arbitration Committee, a Joint Board and a Referendum Council, might all do necessary work, and wondrously illustrate the differing functions of the many members of the body, described by Paul in 1 Cor. xii.-xiv., and yet so largely ignored under our present-day Church régime. The institutional Church—a modern annexe embodying the longings of many who have the Master's passion for blessing the bodies as well as the souls of the poor and the unreached masses of the community—would be well served by proportionally elected committees; for it is as certain that self-government and the mingling on

[1] Tit. iii. 8, 14. [2] 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.

equal terms of rich and poor would give full play to the movement, as that patronage and condescension would kill it.

If our Churches had had a wide and varied organisation, enlisting everybody's sympathies and gifts at one point or other, the gulf into which so many Sunday scholars glide as they approach manhood or womanhood would long ago have been successfully bridged. For the like reason there would probably have been no occasion whatever for Moody's sad remark: "The greatest trouble in soul-winning work is that the Churches do not know how to take care of converts
1 when we have won them".[1]

Be all this as it may, if we may judge from Church attendance, it is evident that the "one-man ministry," under which a majority of Church members are left with that most irksome and demoralising of tasks, "nothing to do," is becoming less and less popular as the years go by; and, instead of attributing the unfortunate situation to pleasure worship, materialism, agnosticism or other causes, would it not be fitter and wiser for us, with our Church methods so far away from New Testament practice, to consider whether, after all, *these* are not largely responsible for hatching the spiritually anæmic idlers, and driving them into the courses we lament?

In Churches organised on the principle, "to every one his
2 work,"[2] the minister would at least be entirely relieved of
3 temporal matters (ministering to tables[3]); he would cease to be the "man of all work" and proxy for drones which, under present conditions, he so often tends to become; and would thus have his whole time and energies freed for his own pro-
4 per and far higher function—"the ministry of the Word".[4]

[1] *The Christian*, 2nd March, 1905, p. 15.

[2] Mark xiii. 34. [3] Acts vi. 4.

[4] Ministers without business aptitude or training are anything but a help as *ex-officio* chairmen of their various Church committees. In Acts vi. and 1 Tim. v. 17 we have seen how important is the sphere of ruling elders who do not "labour in the Word and in teaching"; their place, therefore, should not, however unwittingly, be usurped by the preacher and teacher of "the Word".

Should any conservative admirer of existing Church life whisper into his minister's ear—"Such an exaltation of many members on committees would inevitably sink your personality and power," he should receive the reply—"Art thou jealous for my sake? would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them!"[1]

This is precisely the spirit which has distinguished the Welsh ministers throughout the recent revival. They have, with but rare exception, stood aside and allowed the Spirit to manifest Himself in numberless ways in the congregations as it pleased Him, without attempt at asserting their authority.

The *ad hoc* Ecclesia elections would probably suggest another reform to most of the denominations, *viz.*, a more direct and efficient control of their theological colleges. It is notorious that in numbers of these, both Free Church and Anglican, vital departments of the teaching are in a most unsatisfactory condition; with the frequent result of producing ministers who have little real knowledge of Scripture,[2] are practically unacquainted and thus out of sympathy with evangelistic work, or, worst of all, have had their deepest convictions so blighted by broad and shallow Biblical criticism that they really do not know what they believe. Is it not intolerable that a class of men, who have so much to do with the making or marring of the Churches, should be trained in institutions over whose administration and policy the Church members, upon whom colleges and ministers alike depend mainly for support, have no real influence or control?

[1] Num. xi. 29.

[2] "His experience was leading him more and more to the decision that the cardinal defect of the Christian ministry was that ministers did not know their Book. They could not be successful in the pulpit or as teachers unless they were full to overflowing with the Bible" (Jowett—quoted in *Sunday School Chronicle* of 19th April, 1906, p. 367).

But if the various evangelical colleges were located in large university cities, and each was administered by a committee elected directly and proportionally by the whole constituency of its denomination—such committee preferably being mainly composed of residents of the particular city that they might always be available for its meetings—it is morally certain that the teaching would be more Scriptural and practical, and thus far more likely to produce noble and devoted Christians, than that provided by the present virtually co-opted and therefore practically irresponsible college boards. Further, the governing committees of the several denominational colleges in the same city might, under such a system, jointly arrange for the granting of really high-class theological degrees.[1]

An evil of the like general character unquestionably exists in denominational missionary administration. Any one who will be at the trouble to compare carefully and discriminatingly the work of the various missionary societies will find that, in fruitfulness and rapidity of growth, those of them whose governing committees are appointed either by the central hierarchy of the denomination or by committees formed from the general body of local delegates constituting its annual assembly, are far behind the "free-lance" organisations, whose committees (like that of Acts vi.) are elected by, and thus in touch with, the subscribers.

The Wesleyans, by their magnificent efforts in Manchester and various other local centres, have in *home mission* work set an example to all other denominations; and it is simply incredible that an elected *ad hoc* committee would have allowed their foreign missionary income—instead of greatly increasing like that of the other denominations—to decline so seriously as it did during recent years.

[1] The students of denominational colleges located in large centres of population would be face to face with "The city: its sins and sorrows," *i.e.*, with the nation's gravest moral and social problems; in country colleges they must necessarily lead a more monastic life.

The moral seems to be that not only the College Committee and the Missionary Committee but all the other central committees of a denomination should be elected directly and proportionally by its membership. The notorious apathy of the rank and file of the denominations in regard to central administration is, beyond doubt, mainly due to their sense of powerlessness to guide and control the action of delegates who —elected to deal with a thousand and one matters and questions and not being " Admirable Crichtons "—are very largely pawns in the hands of the hierarchy leaders.

The simple fact is, that the life and power of constituencies of all kinds have been too long hamstrung by nominal but unreal representation; and not till the electors can give a direct proportional vote for every departmental body will they be either able or anxious to extirpate autocratic, bureaucratic or mediocre administration.[1]

There would be no serious obstacle in the way of a denominational election planned to secure equitable representation of all sections of the electorate on every administrative committee.

The suggested scheme of Ecclesia elections described in detail on p. 297 *seq.* is based (however imperfectly) on the great representative principles embodied in apostolic precedents. Now if these principles are, as the writer believes, Christ's divine gift both to His community and to the world at large, they should be equally applicable to all representative institutions.

[1] We all at times see and freely discount press paragraphs telling us that such and such a conference (social, industrial, political or religious), representing a society of so many thousand members, has " passed the following resolution " upon some current question; the fact being that, without a specific mandate or instruction from the members, the conference could only guess (with the wish usually father to the thought) what is their mind on the matter. Obviously *ad hoc* committees, elected proportionally and for reasonable periods, would, as bodies of specialists, lead or at all events mirror the mind of their constituency on their several departmental subjects.

In the elections of national as distinguished from local organisations, doubtless a difficulty would be the provision of the necessarily large number of local voting places. But as such elections would—if the departmental committees are to have a fair and reasonable time to sow and reap the fruit of their policies—probably be quadrennial only, and as, moreover, the voting would be supervised in each locality by an unpaid elections committee elected under the regulations planned by a *central* elections committee, it may be assumed that the extra cost and labour which the method would involve would be much more than counterbalanced by the gain in improved administration, from giving full effect to the mind of the electorate on all questions of departmental policy—a result which, under the existing system (loved of hierarchs), it is obviously impossible to achieve.

One of the most crippling consequences of the Bedouin régime of non-federated tribal bodies is its all but complete lack of co-ordination between the denominations in our cities and towns on any matter or subject of public interest. Every tribe does what seems to be right in its own eyes : with the inevitable result of overlapping effort and incalculable waste of the existing insufficient force. In a nation whose very life is threatened by drink, gambling, vice, and many forms of luxury and pleasure worship, how deeply, discreditably unchristian is this! Imagine the result to a city if the aldermen and councillors of its various wards cut their several areas adrift from the community, and refused to act any longer together. Would there not be great mass meetings of the citizens to demand immediate reunion for the common good? Or if, in place of the present unified government of the cities, there were eight or ten distinct tribes or parties, each of these having a number of clubs spread over the city, and every club controlling those of the citizens who attached themselves and their families to it—what a movement there would be to end the governmental chaos! Why then, in this twentieth century of the Christian

era, should "the light of the world" have to go back to first principles to learn, as if it were a new thing, that "God is not a God of confusion but of peace as in all the Ecclesias of the saints"?[1]

Once more: let us suppose the viceroy of a Chinese province —whose capital, a huge city, had for years been frightfully decimated by plague—urged by an influential missionary (*a*) to employ a front rank Western sanitary authority to carefully examine the city and its environs, investigate the water supply, sewage and refuse disposal, the people's homes, food, clothing, occupations and habits; weigh all other factors bearing on disease; and then make an exhaustive report, with practical remedial recommendations; (*b*) to engage a number of able Western physicians to come and live in the city, mutually apportion their spheres of work, prescribe for every patient, and jointly arrange for hospital treatment and other needful action in common. The viceroy, after years of hesitancy, finally rejects the survey suggestion, and engages a large number of doctors to work promiscuously in the city and without even hinting at their concerted action. Could we blame an Oriental, steeped in age-long empirical traditions, for such a decision, when we reflect that our Christian denominations are, in effect, carrying out the very same policy, in the most momentous things, in almost every city occupied by them, in this year of grace, 1907?

Hidebound by prescription and tradition, the last thing we seem to think of as denominations is (as W. T. Stead long ago remarked) a *joint* moral survey of our cities, and a united effort, in Christ's name, to end the frightful social conditions prevailing in many parts of our so-called Christian land. Well might the Saviour remark: "The sons of this world are for their own generation wiser than the sons of the light";[2] for, all around us, we see common interests—industrial, social, philanthropic and scientific—crystallising into associa-

[1] 1 Cor. xiv. 33. [2] Luke xvi. 8.

tions and combinations; but how little welding together of the forces of Christians as such! More than eighteen hundred years ago the Christians of each city set the world the example of union, by recognising themselves members of "one body" under their living Head. But the self-governing New Testament community was blighted and virtually destroyed by power-loving bishops and hierarchs. Shall we now, therefore, restore our pristine power for good in the world, by federally joining the "tribes" in every centre under Him, and Him alone, who tells us "all authority hath been [1] given unto me in heaven and on earth"?[1] That step is all that is required. United in Him, we would not, as now, be content only to "pray for kings and all that are in high places". As His co-workers, we would do our utmost to elect and vigilantly support rulers who would be "ministers of God" "for good"; "not a terror to the good work, but to [2] the evil".[2]

In a word, having perfected our own instrumentality by restoring the Ecclesia organisation, we would not rest till we had maximised its beneficent influence in the world by carrying the reform of the municipality and the State on the same [3] great governmental lines.[3]

[1] Matt. xxviii. 18. [2] Rom. xiii. 3, 4, 6.

[3] The measureless importance, from the divine standpoint, of the State in maintaining the justice, liberty, law and order which help and are so greatly helped by the Gospel, is illustrated in a remarkable vision of Zechariah (Zech. iii., iv.), not often cited in this connection. At a period, during the building of the second temple, when Joshua the high priest and Zerubbabel the civil governor of Jerusalem were deeply depressed by their surrounding difficulties, Zechariah is shown a golden lampstand with seven lamps and seven oil pipes to each lamp: indicating doubtless the *completeness* both of the light of God and of His means for its maintenance. To reassure the two leaders, however, beyond all doubt that He would *perpetually* sustain the respective spiritual and civil ministries they represented, the supply of oil is shown to be maintained, not by human hands as in the actual temple, but by *two growing olive-trees*, one on each side of the lamps, and delivering their oil to them through two branches called "the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth".

If, through His over-ru.ing providence, the powers that be are even now in

Perhaps the crowning folly of the existing clannish separatism of the denominations is the deplorable waste it involves of their political power in the municipality and the State.[1]

Illustrations of this at once occur to us in the drink question, the education question and the Irish question.[2] Each of these complex problems has for generations caused the nation unspeakable anxiety and loss; but all of them might long ago have been solved by Christian statesmanship had "the members of Christ" in each locality discussed them *together* in the spirit of their Head. Beyond all question, if the Christians of each centre of population came together in His name, resolved henceforth to be as loyal to Him and the principles of His Word as they had hitherto been to party leaders and objects, they could themselves form an independent and most powerful body in the commonwealth. When the electorate saw an organisation ignoring sectarian and partisan interests, and aiming only at the spiritual and material well-being of the people; when it was further evident that its principles and methods embodied both the true liberalism and conservatism of Paul's maxim, "Prove all

large measure "ministers" of His "service" (Rom. xiii. 1-7, specially v. 6; 1 Peter ii. 13, 14), what will they be when His name is everywhere hallowed and His Kingdom has come upon earth?

Let us meantime rejoice in the clear assurance that He who tells us "Lo, I am with you alway," will be at the helm, both of His Ecclesia and of the State, "even unto the end of the world" (Matt. xxviii. 20).

[1] The remark of a powerful party "boss" in America that "Politicians care much for the labour vote, for it goes solid, but they care nothing for the Church vote" (*The Christian*, 12th Nov., 1903, p. 12), illustrates the practical uselessness of Christians as such at the polls through disunion. In England we do not even *have* a "Church vote"! Could there be more melancholy evidence of the necessity for Christian federation?

[2] See *The Ruin of Education in Ireland*, by F. H. O'Donnell, M.A. (David Nutt, 1902); *Priests and People in Ireland*, by M. J. F. McCarthy, B.A. (Simpkin, Marshall & Co., 1902); and *Rome in Ireland*, by the same author (Hodder & Stoughton, 1904).

[1] things; hold fast that which is good,"[1] large numbers of citizens, sick of time-serving candidates and of the party spirit which had hitherto impelled them to follow their leaders right or wrong, and perceiving in a movement inspired by such purely disinterested aims a means of delivering the nation from its present *impasse* in matters of reform, would hasten to rally round its flag.

Its following in the community would thus become so influential a factor in politics that the parties would soon vie with each other for its support. As a result it would acquire such power in parliamentary elections that many burning questions hitherto incapable of solution, through the bitterly partisan treatment they have received, would be definitively settled on wise, just, and truly patriotic lines.

Increasing public support would in the same way give it strength enough to grapple with the three national cancers of drink, gambling and vice, whose evil roots are so ramifying in all directions that, if their growth is not speedily checked, they may soon be humanly beyond hope of extirpation. But

[1] 1 Thess. v. 21. Should not we Christians:—

(*a*) As *liberals*, be "swift to hear" and examine, without prejudice, every rational scheme for blessing our fellow-men; enterprising enough to test it; and, if successful, full of enthusiasm in carrying it into effect? When we found we were on wrong lines, should we not thank God for the experience and, remembering that we "ought always to pray and not to faint," go to Him for guidance and renewed courage, assured that "in due season we shall reap if we faint not"?

(*b*) As *conservatives*, recalling the tremendous cost of the struggles which have purchased past reforms and built up many precious institutions, should we not wisely cherish all that is good in these, by investigating and advocating the Scripture principles on which they are based, and opposing all pseudo-liberal movements which would deprive us of our blood-bought heritage?

(*c*) As "the body of Christ," should we not lead our nation to confirm, extend and increase the few divine principles embodied in our foreign policy which have given us our great power for good in the world? Linked in council and action with our brethren by blood and faith in the great trans-Atlantic community, we could, by a right example and precept, and a just and fearless use of our moral power, lead every race to emancipation from spiritual and political oppression, and to the adoption of the numberless reforms which flow from the divine *liberalism* and *conservatism* of "the Word of Christ".

with God's blessing on the union of His people—"the saints" who, under their Captain's leadership, are to possess "the kingdom"[1]—there can be no doubt that this triad of devils 1
can be "cast out".

It may be taken for granted that a Christian party would not be content with moral triumphs on home questions. Realising its tremendous responsibility to God for the crying iniquities and evil developments which result from the lack of moral courage in our foreign and colonial policy; perceiving, too, how often we are outwitted in the field of diplomacy in the chancelleries of other nations; yet profoundly convinced that whenever we stand for the great principles of righteousness and justice, which are the foundation of the eternal throne,[2] "the Lord of hosts is with us,"[3] such a party would 2 3
demand—That in future no premier, foreign minister, colonial secretary, or governor of a British possession shall be appointed to office unless his record (like that of Daniel and Joseph) shows him to be inspired by the principles of the highest and truest statesmanship. This would ensure (*a*) that no viceroy would be allowed to govern India who has not sufficient principle and administrative ability to liquidate its

[1] Dan. vii. 22. [2] Ps. xcvii. 2.

[3] Ps. xlvi. 7, 11. The opportunism which inspires so much of our foreign policy amply explains John Bright's despondent remark: "At home and in domestic affairs we learn much; in foreign affairs we seem to learn nothing" (letter dated 17th May, 1885).

What is our Empire worth if it is not led by Christian statesmanship; if, wherever its flag floats, it does not secure complete religious liberty and equality; if it fails to carefully train its many subject races in the principles and practice of self-government?

How lacking in moral courage is the record of both our party cabinets on the Armenian and Macedonian questions; how discreditable the fact that we have not long ago, by the might of ceaseless moral and magisterial pressure, emancipated the Balkan States from the intrigues and counter-intrigues of Russia and Austria, and compelled the Sultan to fulfil his treaty obligations!

The piteous nervelessness of our diplomacy during the many years in which it has failed to insist on the immediate stoppage of the Congo atrocities has been another melancholy spectacle for Christian Englishmen.

[1] finances without the opium manufacture;[1] (*b*) that no ruler would be left in charge of a West African or other colony who, for the same reason, is too weak to end its murderous [2] spirit traffic and woman-degrading polygamy;[2] or of British East Africa, who cannot or will not once for all abolish its slavery; (*c*) that no Sirdar would be retained in the Sudan, and no governor in Nigeria who dare not maintain the principle

[1] The positive infamy of our Chinese foreign policy, described in detail in the revelations of the Hon. Chester Holcombe (*China's Past and Future*, Morgan & Scott, 1s.), cannot be contemplated by any Englishman without unspeakable mortification that the opium traffic is still maintained by the Indian, and therefore the British, Government.

Well might the *Church Missionary Intelligencer* (Oct., 1905, p. 789) say of our shameless course in this matter: "Mr. Roosevelt's pacific and persistent efforts, for which the world's gratitude has been duly rendered, must have been inoperative but for the unlooked-for magnanimity of the victors. One of the Mikado's most influential advisers, Baron Kaneko, is quoted to have remarked: 'Compared with what we receive—the power to prove to the world that peace is dear to us, that pagan treatment of prisoners is comparable to Christian treatment, that Japan is entitled now to a place in the world's councils—money is of secondary importance. In Japan the spirit of the Samurai *Bushido* prevails; we regard honour both of the individual and of the nation as above money; we value peace and neighbourly relations even with those who have fought us. Such is the spirit of Japan; I do not care whether we obtain money or not.' We must confess that in view of Japan's attitude on this momentous occasion, in view of her anxiety to deserve the respect and admiration of enlightened humanity, we are abashed at the sordid policy unblushingly pursued for generations in China by our own Christian Government." The *Intelligencer* might have added—"and unspeakably ashamed at the *unchristian* separatism which has paralysed the power of the denominations to prevent such things being done by a so-called Christian nation".

[2] Those unaware of the lengths to which British governors and agents not permeated by Christian principle may go in winking at infamous institutions and practices, should read an article in the *Missionary Review of the World* for October, 1906, telling of the Baluchistan slave trade (in which men dispose of their mothers and daughters like cattle), of the devilry perpetrated upon boys at the court of the paramount chief (the Khan of Khelat), of the widespread immorality and laziness of the male population of the country, of the frightful condition of the women who are everywhere their abject slaves—the whole situation being the outcome chiefly of the *prevailing polygamous system*. (The article is by A. Duncan Dixey, Missionary of the Church Missionary Society, Quetta, Baluchistan.) Query: Why is not this curse suppressed throughout the Empire by treating all *new* polygamous "unions" like cases of bigamy at home?

of absolute impartiality in religious matters by granting to Christians the complete religious liberty he has assured to Moslems.[1]

Now, as comparatively few Englishmen have vested interests in the maintenance of these particular evils, it may safely be

[1] Since these lines were penned, Lord Cromer (whose great work as an economist and administrator in Egypt is familiar to us all) has announced not only that Christian missionary work will still be prohibited in the *Mohammedan* Sudan, but that the vast *pagan* region has been divided into three portions: the eastern (Sobat) basin being allotted exclusively to an American Presbyterian Mission; the great basin of the White Nile similarly to the Church Missionary Society; and the western territory of the Bahr-el-Ghazal province to an Austrian Roman Catholic Mission.

The governor of Northern Nigeria has unhappily adopted the same pernicious policy, having prohibited Christian missionary work in each of its Mohammedan provinces whose Emir objects to it, whilst at the same time giving unrestricted liberty to Mohammedan propagandists in all parts of the protectorate. Worse than this, the *pax Britannica* is now enabling Mohammedans to plant mosques in many *pagan* towns where previously for centuries they dare not enter. But immediately one of the smallest of these Moslem buildings is erected in a town, Christian missionaries are forbidden by the British administration to operate in the locality (May, 1906, issue of *The Lightbearer*, the monthly serial of the Sudan United Mission, p. 76).

As regards Egypt itself the following statement in the *Church Missionary Intelligencer* for September, 1906 (p. 656), clearly warns us of the Nemesis which Lord Cromer has sown by his fostering of Mohammedan teaching. Although the Christian Copts—the direct descendants of the ancient Egyptian people—form 10 per cent. of the population: "The Koran has been officially recognised as the *only* religious book that may be taught in Government schools. The Moslem sheikh is the *only* religious teacher that has any right of entrance. The Moslem *giblah* or mosque is the *only* place of worship which the Education Department will suffer to exist within the school grounds, even where an English headmaster resides close by. . . .

"If this be true, is it possible for British civilians in Egypt to deny the serious assertion, made in all earnestness and with the deepest conviction before a representative body of Christian workers by one of the oldest and most respected American missionaries in Egypt, after a residence of at least forty-five years in the country, that 'the British occupation has greatly strengthened the position of Mohammedanism in Egypt'? But we need not go to an American missionary for such a statement, for it is admitted on all sides by Anglo-Egyptians that an unprecedented wave of Pan-Islamism has lately been sweeping over the land."

How long will disunited British Christians permit this fearful blundering by rulers who, however great as economic reformers, are evidently incapable of grasping the first principles of *Christian* statesmanship?

assumed that the nation, as a whole, would heartily applaud their extirpation by any cabinet which had the needed faith and courage to do its duty in regard to them. Moreover, since Christ Himself assures us that "all things are possible" to them that believe,[1] can we doubt that the special departmental committees, which would be launched by the new Ecclesias in our many centres of population,[2] would ere long be able to marshal the people in a great and resistless demand for justice and righteousness in our whole national policy and legislation?

Of the many pressing reforms still to be carried, the following may be mentioned merely as examples:—

The definitive abolition of slavery and every form of civil and religious oppression, the securement of complete equality before the law to every individual in the Empire, the conferment of the fullest political rights and privileges upon all persons of whatever colour, race, caste, rank or creed who possess the qualifications which entitle Englishmen to them.

The official inspection, by surprise visits, of the administration of all our Crown colonies and other possessions which are without representative government; the systematic education of their native races, and the training of these to fit them at the earliest practicable moment for self-government.

The general suppression of Sunday labour except for works of necessity or mercy: a severe penalty being exacted for placing any man under any disability for refusing to work on the Lord's Day.

The earnest and energetic promotion of negotiations for securing treaties of arbitration with all foreign States; and the appointment of an international deciding tribunal of unimpeachable character, placed by honour and emoluments, humanly speaking, beyond temptation.

Federated Christian communities, representatively organised, would in a very few years bring about a permanent

[1] Mark ix. 23. [2] See p. 258 *seq.*

reform of the administration of our municipalities. It is notorious amongst those who have had extensive business relations with local authorities that the average standard of the "common councillor" is deplorably low. Here and there, in many places, men of principle and force of character undoubtedly succeed in imparting something of their own high tone to the council; albeit, as a rule, good men entering it, instead of lifting the governing body to their level, sink to that of its own "municipal mediocrity".

One distressing outcome of the existing régime is the revelation of gross abuses in municipal administration ever and anon appearing in the press and tending to make reflecting people despair of permanently reforming local government on its present lines. It would not be difficult to show the fallacy of the prevailing impression that good men are too *apathetic* to enter our city councils in sufficient numbers to regenerate the government of their towns; and to demonstrate, if it were not outside the scope of the present purpose, that the essentials to permanent reform in the municipalities consist in rational constitutional changes which will increase both the honour and responsibility of councillorship—and thereby attract our ablest and most trustworthy men to the office—by making the representation that of the city as a whole, and not merely that of a petty ward, and by the introduction of *ad hoc* election of all committees.

Suffice it here to say that a Christian Ecclesia would not only exert a very powerful local influence in favour of righteous, intelligent and statesmanlike local administration, but would itself afford an object-lesson in governmental principles and methods: its system, if adopted, being peculiarly adapted to secure the maximum of efficiency in every department of city rule.[1]

If all enlightened Christians believe that God takes pro-

[1] The remark applies equally to the government of the State.

foundest interest, not only in the spiritual, but in the social, industrial and governmental working of His world; that He knows the true solution of every question affecting our rights and responsibilities as citizens; and that the key to His point of view, in each case, can be obtained by an unbiassed study of its appropriate divine principles; then there is solid ground for hope that the rank and file of the Christians of a city, *meeting, as such, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit*, would agree in their condemnation of evil policies, and their approval of reforms which are based on the laws and statutes of His Word. It is obviously quite otherwise when Christians discuss party questions on sectional platforms, in a political atmosphere and spirit, and without Scripture guidance; they are then as liable as other men to become special pleaders or fanatics. The Armenian massacres, the Boer war, the recent Education Acts, and the Chinese labour question, have all
[1] given rise to painfully discreditable controversies [1] between Christians, both at public meetings and in the correspondence columns of the press. As a result, instead of convincing the other side by a calm, judicial attitude, the antagonists have, by seeming to magnify half truths and to suppress or ignore others, often embittered the discussion and thus directly increased the number of one-idea partisans.

It is delightful, on the other hand, to know that where Christians, beginning their debates on these questions with totally differing views, have wisely thrown overboard party considerations and firmly restricted discussion to the Bible principles involved, they have arrived at most gratifying agreement upon them. We cannot wonder at this in presence of Christ's assurance: "Where two or three are gathered together *in my name*, there am I in the midst of them". "In my name," we must all admit, means abandonment to the guidance of

[1] What a reproof of this spirit do we find in Paul's words to the Corinthian Christians for going to law with each other "before the unrighteous, and not before the saints" (1 Cor. vi. 1-12)!

His spirit, *i.e.*, implicit, unquestioning obedience to *all* His truths, principles, precepts, examples and methods, as recorded and transmitted to us by His inspired agents, the apostles. When, in this mind, with "ears to hear," we are "swift to hear," and "take heed how" we hear, His revealed infallible truth, it is certain we receive "an anointing from the Holy One and know all things" needful from His point of view. In the same Spirit, led by the same Word, the apostles, elders and members of the Jerusalem Ecclesia came, as we have already seen, to a completely harmonious conclusion on a far more deeply prejudiced and embittered question than any which has arisen in our own time.[1] And, since Christ is [1]
waiting to lead us "into all the truth," we have every reason to believe that *in His Spirit, guided by His Word, into His Way*,[2] [2]
the like unanimous conclusions would be reached, on our many divisive questions, by each "Ecclesia of God" or representative gathering of the Christian tribes of its city, or other centre of population to-day.[3] [3]

We must not, however, forget that Christ's "Way," as embodied in the practice of the inspired founders of His Ecclesia, is to place separate bodies of elders in charge of distinct departments of work; and that, in the nature of things, such *ad hoc* committees would be specialists and authorities on the subjects entrusted to them. Each would exhaustively study the various practical questions within its

[1] It is plain that, from the beginning, there were two parties in the Jerusalem Ecclesia more deeply divided in conviction than even our modern Anglican and Free Church camps (Acts xv. 5), yet *they* lived harmoniously together as one Christian community (Acts xv. 22, 30, 31; xxi. 20, 21).

[2] Acts xix. 9, 23; xxiv. 14.

[3] If it be said that another apostolic Ecclesia—that of Corinth—manifested the spirit of faction and permitted grossly immoral acts in its members, it must be remembered that it had no New (and probably very few copies of the Old) Testament as a guide, nor other than rare visits from the apostle; that its raw material was drawn from the worshippers of Venus (Aphrodite) and Bacchus (Dionysus); and that their city was so notorious for its luxury and immorality that the very phrase "a Corinthian" came to be a synonym for a licentious man.

sphere, in the light of Scripture principles, and make known its conclusions and the grounds on which they were based. In this rational way all would be enabled, intelligently and whole-heartedly, to follow Paul's admonition, "Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment".[1]

As things are, the rank and file, however much preoccupied otherwise, encounter all the questions of the day, not only without help from men set apart to study and report upon them, but too often, unhappily, without even a thought of Scripture light or guidance! Is it surprising that when we meet and exchange ideas, as "jacks-of-all-trades," we often do so in the spirit of antagonism? How different is all this from the "Way" of the apostles, as seen in the controversy on the Antioch question. There the chief speakers were "authorities" in the highest sense, *i.e.*, both by practical experience of the questions at issue and investigation of the Scripture principles involved;[2] and their conclusions carried such conviction to their hearers as to bring about a completely unanimous vote!

There is another aspect of the existing unchristian situation which (in England at least) should profoundly move all manly and honest souls. Dissociated from each other, like Bedouin tribes or Afghan clans, are we not in the world's eyes hypocrites in proclaiming God's will to be "peace on earth," whilst *ourselves* remaining "a house divided against itself"; an army of *estranged* camps?

We daily offer the second and third petitions of the Lord's Prayer, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth," whilst even the first—the condition precedent of the second, as clearly as that is of the third—is practically

[1] 1 Cor. i. 10. [2] Acts xv. 14, 15.

ignored by the attitude of our tribes. How can God's name be "hallowed" among men, whilst we make no sincere effort to fulfil Christ's prayer that His people "may be perfected into one; that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me"?

Of course truth has an intrinsic power to bless, whether it proceed from clean lips or a lying tongue. Christ said: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat: all things therefore whatsoever they bid you, these do and observe: but do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not".[1] [1]

But how infinitely more telling was His own precept because *supported by example!* And how vastly would *our* influence and weight with the community be increased if Christian reunion and its abounding "love, joy, peace" constrained men to hallow—to revere, to magnify and glorify—the Father's name.

We speak of our mystical union in Christ. Perhaps the world would cease to spell it "mythical" if it no longer saw Anglicans and Free Churchmen separated in life, and, at its close, getting their bodies buried in different sections of the same cemetery! "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."[2] [2]

Christ said all His followers "shall become one flock, one shepherd".[3] But, since the whole is equal to its parts, how [3] can this ever be realised in the *world* until the "folds" in each *city* become "one flock"?[4] If we love not our brethren whom [4] we have seen, how can we love those whom we have not seen? Instead of attempting vain spread-eagle schemes for "the union of the Churches," *i.e.*, the denominations, by merging them under one vast hierarchy, would we not do well to preserve their delightful individuality by locally federating them on the tribal foundations of the new Jeru-

[1] Matt. xxiii. 2, 3. [2] John xiii. 35.
[3] John x. 16. [4] Acts xx. 28.

salem[1]—by contenting ourselves, in short, with the city family organisation planned by Christ's inspired apostles? Nay, if the Christians of a city are specifically told that they are "the body of Christ," should not such a solidarity pervade every limb and organ that "if one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it; or one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it"?[2] Speaking honestly, if the members of Christ's body were suffused with the Spirit of their Head, could they for an hour endure their present shameful disseverance? "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, even as I have loved you."[3] How is that love to be acquired? In the very act of obeying Him;[4] of fulfilling His prayer that we "may be perfected into one,"[5] by coming together as *equal* tribes, and organising our union on His apostles' lines. "Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting *one another;* and so much the more, as ye see the day drawing nigh."[6]

Many centuries behind us have produced only visionary schemes of union. Has not the time now come to let the "Leader and Commander" achieve it in His own way?

That it will have to be compassed by the power of His divine Spirit must be evident to every Christian who surveys the *humanly* hopeless situation.

The informal holiday conferences between Anglicans and Free Churchmen in Switzerland, some years ago, gave delightful expression to the desire for Christian union. Unhappily, however, so far as the Anglican clergymen present were concerned, they were of a strictly academic character; and thus left the Lambeth *sine qua non* of A.D. 1888 (*i.e.*, the episcopal "ordination" of Free Church ministers) practically

[1] Rev. xxi. 12, 19 *seq.* [2] 1 Cor. xii. 26, 27. [3] John xv. 12.
[4] John xv. 10. [5] John xvii. 23. [6] Heb. x. 24, 25.

unchanged. Since that date it has become increasingly clear that, whatever Anglican laymen may feel, a large number of their clergy are as little prepared to recognise the validity of Nonconformist "orders," as are the Roman Catholic hierarchy to acknowledge any status in *theirs*.

Many Free Churchmen think it useless to talk about union with Anglicans till the State Church is disestablished. But, however desirable for many reasons that reform may be (most of all that it would secure for Anglicans that unfettered life and power for good which have enabled their State-free Church Missionary Society to do such glorious things for Christ[1]), it will not necessarily further Christian union. [1]

Disestablishment in Ireland, a generation ago, greatly as it has quickened and invigorated the former State Church, has not yet led Protestant episcopal clergymen to fraternise with Free Church ministers. We know, too, that in Australia the Anglican Church, though not established, "is just as exclusive and just as little ready to co-operate with other Churches as it is in England".[2] [2]

In the United States, whose history has known so little of Erastianism, the various Protestant bishops were some years since asked to sanction an interchange of pulpits between their ministers and those of other evangelical denominations. To a man, they returned a *non possumus* reply to the proposal.

Reviewing, with warm approval, the proceedings of the Triennial Convention of the Episcopal Church in the United States, held in Boston, October, 1904, the *Missionary Review of the World* (Dec., 1904) frankly adds:—

[1] Not only should the great spiritual results achieved by the non-established Church Missionary Society show evangelical Anglicans what is possible under self-government; but the comparative facts from State Church Britain and Free Church America should still further reassure them on this vital point. In England and Wales just over 4,000,000, or 12·3 per cent., of the population are members of Anglican and Evangelical Nonconformist Churches, whereas in the United States over 17,000,000, or 19 per cent., of the population are Church members. (*Liberator* for Dec., 1904, p. 183.)

[2] *British Weekly*, 20th March, 1902, p. 587, col. 2.

"With all this, which stirs sympathy in every Christian, one cannot but regret that the Convention refused to appoint delegates to the National Conference on Federation of Churches, which is to take place next year. This refusal seems to be out of harmony with the great and general movement towards Christian fraternity that marks the present time."[1]

It is quite true that at the great annual conventions in the Keswick tent and similar gatherings elsewhere, a number of Anglican clergymen conduct religious services jointly with Free Church ministers; but the Platonic character of such union is shown by the fact that the moral courage of these good vicars and prebendaries, when they get back to their parishes, evaporates as completely as did Peter's at Antioch in presence of representatives of James: they never exchange pulpits with Free Church ministers. If they assure us that they cannot legally do so, then we are confronted with the fact that there are thousands of clergymen brave enough to defy their bishops by illegal sacramentalism; but none who, like the apostles, has the courage to break Cæsar's law[2] where it infringes the law of Christ[3]—by exchanging pulpits with evangelical Free Church ministers. There is not even a movement amongst them to alter the law in this respect, for

[1] These facts all go to show the futility of waiting till we get disestablishment. But is not the waiting attitude both useless and *wrong?* Christ said to Peter: "What is that to thee? Follow thou me" (John xxi. 22). Our duty is to unite *now*, in His name, all who, undeterred by party or State-church considerations, are prepared to confess themselves joint and equal members of His body (1 Cor. xii. 12, 13, 14). Federated on that basis, our power and influence would be resistless, for "If God is for us, who is against us?" (Rom. viii. 31). Many spiritually minded Anglicans would feel that to remain outside the city community founded by the apostles (Rev. ii. 1), "the Ecclesia of God" (1 Cor. i. 2), "the temple of God" (1 Cor. iii. 17), "the body of Christ" (1 Cor. xii. 27), would be schism indeed; and a brief experience of its "communion of saints" would probably do more to enlighten them on the injury and loss to His cause resulting from State establishment than all the past decades of political agitation.

[2] Mark xii. 17.

[3] Matt. xxiii. 8.

Canon Hensley Henson's appeal to his brethren to at least somewhat modify present caste distinctions is merely "a voice crying in the wilderness".[1] 1

In each denomination we often hear the church edifice called "the house of God".[2] That certainly is not an apostolic conception;[3] but waiving the point, we would say—If God 2 3

[1] See p. 128, *note*.

[2] Does not the custom of many Free Churchmen of styling their place of worship a "chapel," and restricting the word "church" to the Christian organisation assembling in it, simply have the effect of lowering them in the eyes of the Anglican clergy, who certainly need no stimulus to their ascendency views? Moreover, is it not against world-wide usage to have one name for an organisation and another for the building in which it regularly meets? Men are not likely to give up calling the body as well as the soul of the institution a church, a synagogue, a school, a club, a court, a bank, an exchange, vitally important in every case though the difference between the two may be. (Nobody is misled by this conventional use of words. Otherwise it would not have been practised by Scripture writers. That they spoke as we do to-day is evident from many passages. Two examples, from the employment of the words "one" and "all," may suffice —"One," Acts xxviii. 25; "All," Mark i. 5.)

The unthinking use also, by many Nonconformists, of the Erastian phrase, "*The* Church of England," seems even more objectionable. When we refer in conversation to "*The* King of England," we, of course, mean England's *only* King. Obviously, then, if we use the definite article and say "*The* Church of England," we unchurch all other English denominations. Now as there are already three alternative designations ("the Anglican Church," "the State Church," "the Established Church") this traditional expression is not needed to buttress the present attitude of Anglican clergymen. The complete lack of taste, to say nothing of Christlike feeling, which leads Irish Anglicans to-day, a generation after their disestablishment, to go on flaunting the phrase "*The* Church of Ireland" in the face of other Irish Protestant denominations (to say nothing of the vastly preponderating Irish Roman Catholic Church), should not only remind non-Episcopalian Irishmen of Paul's counsel to Titus, "Let no man despise thee," but should impel Nonconformists on this side the Channel also to cease using the dominating and unchristian title.

When Christ said, "My kingdom is not of this world," He declared once for all that the King's writ does not run in His territory and that State legislation and nomenclature have no validity or authority in His spiritual communities. It is gratifying to see one Free Church denomination's head quite clear in this matter, *viz.*, "the *Presbyterian* Church of England". A few years hence, if the various Methodist denominations decide to merge, they—being then the only Methodist organisation—will doubtless adopt a like national denominational designation.

[3] 1 Tim. iii. 15; 1 Peter iv. 17; Heb. viii. 2; ix. 1.

is the host in these church buildings, what should we think of one of His guests proudly refusing either to sit on a seat which another honoured guest had used, or to permit the latter to take one he had used himself? Would we be surprised if he were rebuked, and told: "What God hath cleansed make not thou common"?

Years ago the writer and a brother were working a mine in Southern California. Their last engaged workman (the employés were of various nationalities) was a brown-skinned Mexican mason whose straight black hair showed Indian descent but no trace of negro blood. In accordance with "Far West" practice, employers and employed partook together of the common meal. As the Mexican seated himself, a Nova Scotian who had lived some years in the States and who, whenever he could procure alcohol, was the worst workman, silently rose from the table and left the room. After dinner he came to his employers, with tears in his eyes, to say how deeply it had pained him to appear to affront them by an act implying that the Mexican, though good enough for them, was not good enough for him, but that his "conscience" prevented him sitting at the table with "the darkey". It must be wondrously reassuring to Free Church ministers to know that if unacknowledged by their Anglican brethren, they are by Him whose divine grace "without respect of persons" has made them "fellow-citizens with the saints and [1] of the household of God".[1]

Having this flawless title, and remembering how their Lord and Master, despising shame, suffered without the gate, it is a light thing for them to bear "His reproach" and dispense with Anglican fraternisation until it is sincerely desired by Anglican clergymen themselves.

[1] Under the new convenant the tribes of the spiritual Israel are on a perfect equality; there is now no royal tribe of Judah. "All ye are brethren . . . one is your master, the anointed" (Matt. xxiii. 8, 10). And He, thank God, is "the blessed and only Potentate" (1 Tim. vi. 15), through whom we all have, always, equal and immediate access to the Father!

Paul enjoined Titus "Let no man despise thee";[1] doubt- [1]
less because indifference to the loss of his reputation would end his influence for good. It would therefore be worse than useless for Free Churchmen, under existing circumstances, to do more than clearly reiterate that they are, have throughout been, and mean always to be, ready for brotherly communion with Christians of all denominations upon perfectly equal terms.

Meantime, as the Swiss holiday *pourparlers* have not been renewed; as indeed all "comprehension" schemes based on demands for conformity are as hopeless as they are unjust; as, humanly speaking, there is no prospect of fraternal relations between High Church and Free Church ministers *on equal terms;* and as inconceivable injury to the Redeemer's cause and its power for good at home and abroad is continually flowing from the existing division into opposing camps; it will we think be admitted by very many of *the rank and file of the denominations* that the time has fully come for an effort *on New Testament lines* to bring about that union of His people which is so intensely desired by Christ[2] and which [2]
therefore could not fail to produce unspeakably glorious results.

Is motive lacking to do our human part?—then surely the most callous of us will get it from a glance at the condition of vast masses of our population.

We know it is a function of "the salt of the earth" to preserve the body politic from corruption. In view, therefore, of our steadily extending catalogue of national evils and of the "grievous times" which are impending, have we not cause to ask ourselves whether the divided denominationalism which has so feebly reflected Christ to the world, and so long and complacently kept apart the members of His body, has not begun to "lose its savour"; whether, indeed, its forces are

[1] Tit. ii. 15. [2] John xvii. 11, 21, 22, 23.

not at last being outgeneraled and overpowered through its vital departure from apostolic plans?

If God be with us as a people, everything should impel us to "abound in hope". But we have so long frightfully abused our national stewardship of wealth that our moral fibre is at last relaxing, and we are beginning to let go reforms which were purchased for us by our forefathers' blood. Is there an honest British Christian who, after a sober study of the causes of the decline and fall of empires, feels he has a right to be optimist in presence of the following portentous facts?

Increasingly bold and reckless attacks from professedly Christian leaders on the Word of God; a spreading cancer of sacerdotalism in the "national" Church; a bitter partisanship dividing Anglicans and Free Churchmen on various burning questions; a melancholy lack of moral courage and Christian statesmanship in much of our foreign and colonial policy; a stationary or decreasing Church and Sunday school attendance; a growing Sabbath desecration; a great majority of our gaol prisoners once Sunday scholars; a countless aggregate of juvenile imitators of adult smokers; a seriously backward position nationally in education; ever-enlarging legions of theatre-goers and readers of nothing but novels; a multiform pleasure worship and excessive devotion to games and athletics in an Empire which is everywhere crying out for heroic pioneers and heralds of the cross; a steady exodus of our country population crowded out by landowners adding "field to field"; constantly increasing myriads of town dwellers leading unhealthy and most dreary lives; an intense national pride and susceptibility to the war spirit; on the part of many a diminishing anti-slavery sentiment, passion for justice and sympathy for the oppressed; an uncontrollable bureaucracy and extravagance in our leading governmental departments; a national expenditure of over £160,000,000 annually on drink; a seriously increasing number of women

drunkards; tens of thousands of rich and poor and male and female gamblers; in every city a spectral host of prostitutes ruined mainly by the "better" classes; a serious decline in the birth rate and lowering of the national physique; an ominously rapid increase in the proportion of lunatics; a constantly growing number of very poor on the very brink of pauperism; an extraordinary yet mainly preventable infant mortality; thousands of city children going breakfastless to school; a huge army of paupers inside the workhouses; the whole nation perplexed by occasional processions of unemployed; and, in full view of all these, the luxurious materialism of the money-making classes and of "society" leaders with their blatant display of wealth and cynical ostentation, and parliaments denying the nation the power to stop the State licensing a demoralisation which, unarrested, must inevitably bring us to the grave of all the empires of the past.

In this dark catalogue we find many of the moribund symptoms which characterised the decline of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome. If we recall the solemn words, "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN,"[1] and [1] remember how many profligate peoples have been overwhelmed by hardy and virile races from the East, can we look without apprehension at the extraordinary development of nations who yesterday were negligible quantities—of Japan to-day, of China to-morrow (in spite of the traffic with which we have so long cursed her opium smokers), of India ere long pressing to the front?[2] [2]

In presence of our many failures of duty and privilege at home and abroad, how must God regard our effrontery and hardihood in calling ourselves "a Christian nation"! Do not the evils just enumerated show our boasted prosperity and

[1] Dan. v. 25.

[2] "They have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation" (Deut. xxxii. 21; Rom. x. 19, 20).

civilisation to be to a large extent "whited sepulchres, which outwardly appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness"?[1] Nay, is not our "faith, hope, love," as British Christians, narcotised if this spectacle of poverty, misery and vice does not frenzy us into united counsel and action?

That it should have been necessary for General Booth to launch a new denomination, a "Darkest England" movement, to save the bodies and souls of the "submerged tenth" of our cities, is alone a sufficient indictment of our comfortable Church life and methods: all the graver from the fact that much of our failure to win the destitute and the vicious is due to the caste atmosphere which prevails in so many Churches, and is *there* equally or more blameworthy than the ecclesiastical caste which has hitherto prevented Christian reunion.

Should not our real condition as a people wring from all Christians a remorseful cry to God for forgiveness for a separatism which has so largely paralysed our power for good and is so utterly contrary to His will and way?

Knowing how heavily it handicaps us in the desperate struggle now going on in our land between the powers of light and darkness, shall we not ask God Himself to free us from the evil incubus? We must not, we dare not, limit the power of His grace. Not only *can* He save a rich man,[2] but He can now, *if only we agree to ask it in faith*,[3] show the world the new spectacle of saving its richest nation from the common fate of the wealthy, proud, corrupt races of the earth who have gone "down unto Hades".[4]

Every enlightened English Christian believes He has raised us up as a people to a position of unparalleled power and dominion—placing many kings, nations and magnificent realms under our sway—that we might preach everywhere

[1] Matt. xxiii. 27. [2] Mark x. 23-27.
[3] Matt. xviii. 19. [4] Matt. xi. 23.

the glad tidings of eternal life in Christ; "loose the bonds of wickedness, undo the bands of the yoke," "let the oppressed go free" and "break every yoke";[1] in short, "do justly," "love mercy" and "walk humbly" with our God.[2] If, then, we are not to be hopelessly corrupted by the material prosperity which He has vouchsafed to us for far nobler ends; if we are not to abandon the rôle of evangelists, healers, emancipators, and reformers of evils and abuses, the true secret of our power and glory; if we are not to stoop to the carnal and selfish policies of the many nations over whom He has given us pre-eminence; the Christians of our land must in His name come together for united counsel and action, ere the cancer of luxury and vice has eaten too far into the vitals of the people to admit of permanent cure.[3]

But what should be our first step in this matter? We do not lack advisers; for in the ranks of "the light of the world" there are galaxies of preachers, writers, workers, patriots, philanthropists and reformers. Indeed the very multitudinousness of their suggestions for grappling with the spiritual and social problems of the vast Empire which Providence has entrusted to our hands only adds to our distraction and bewilderment.

True it is that "in the multitude of counsellors there is safety," but what cause was ever yet saved by counsel not leading to united *action?* God's first fiat, as He viewed the formless void, was "Let there be light: and there was light," but that was followed by a series of intensely pregnant, majestically orderly acts. And so to-day He "is not a God of confusion, but of peace; as in all the Ecclesias of the saints". Honestly, is not our first duty to drop all our vain, because unscriptural, ideas of non-organic and thus Platonic union; and to change definitively the venue, by pressing the

[1] Isa. lviii. 6. [2] Mic. vi. 8.

[3] Has God's anger been, thus far, averted from our guilty nation by such Christlike work as that of the Missionary and Bible Societies?

helm into the hands of our divine Head who has from the first provided a perfect plan of union in His Word? Can we doubt that if, obeying His injunction, "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works," we bring together again in every city the *disjecta* [1] *membra* of "*the body of Christ*," [1] His four-times-offered prayer on the eve of Calvary for the union of His people will be fulfilled?

Thereby, our moral influence will be immeasurably increased; for Christ, being "lifted up" not only on the lip but in the life, will "draw all men" unto Him, and the day will begin to dawn when "they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me from the least of them unto [2] the greatest of them".[2]

Concurrently, in the governmental sphere, Christian legislation, statesmanship and administration will become the standard of public life; and thus the vision of Isaiah's second chapter will be realised, when "out of Zion shall go forth the law," when the pride of military and naval power, of commerce, and of the art and architecture of man "shall be brought low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day"; when in fine Daniel's prophecy shall receive its glorious fulfilment, "the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and [3] obey him".[3]

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 27; John xvii. 23.
[2] Jer. xxxi. 34; Heb. viii. 11; Matt. xxiv. 14.
[3] Dan. vii. 26, 27.

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

. . . . . .

Ashamed, then, to our very core, of the *divide et impera* régime of Satan, and of our consequent powerlessness to uproot the drink, gambling, vice and numberless other evils which are undermining so much Christian work; and resolved, now at length in Christ's name, to end our Sisyphean task, let us clear ourselves of all complicity with separatism by reconstituting in every city "the Ecclesia of God"; knowing that thereby in every place a divine phalanx will be formed, against which "the gates of Hades shall not prevail".

We have touched on some of the multitudinous evils and limitations under which Christianity is labouring through denominational separatism. Yet it is profoundly reassuring (notwithstanding the temporary set-back of the current caused by the recent Education Acts) to see evidence in so many directions of the widespread *yearning for union.*

Though it is true that there are still Christians to be found who seem never to have looked over the barriers of their denomination, it is deeply gratifying to reflect that all, or practically all, Free Church ministers are ready for a complete federal union of Christians, that in all probability the membership generally only needs to be shown the simple New Testament solution of the problem to heartily support a movement for achieving it; and that, although we cannot yet speak sanguinely of the attitude of the Anglican clergy, there can be little doubt that the great majority of their Protestant communicants would be resistlessly impelled towards a Scriptural movement for the restoration of "the Ecclesia of God".

Blessings abound where'er He reigns;
The prisoner leaps to lose his chains,
The weary find eternal rest,
And all the sons of want are blest.

—Watts.

Amongst the various causes which are increasingly drawing evangelical Christians together are :—

(*a*) The broadening influence of personal intercourse between Christian workers of various denominations in such enterprises as ragged schools, city missions, evangelistic missions, interdenominational foreign missions, the student volunteer missionary movement, the young men's and young women's Christian associations, Christian endeavour societies, summer conventions, a countless number of non-denominational philanthropic crusades, and last, not least, the great work of the British and Foreign Bible Society and of the Religious Tract Society. Across the water an equally extensive development of unsectarian religious and philanthropic organisations is to be seen in the United States. Both there and here, therefore, a legion of workers—the *élite* of the Christian community—are probably ready to echo the question: If, in numberless works of faith and labours of love, Christians of all evangelical denominations can work harmoniously together, what is there to hinder their members in each city tribally federating for all Christian ends?

(*b*) The communion between leaders of Christian thought, whose study of Christian history and literature has shown them that there have been giants in all the tribes, and that every section has contributed to the life, power, beauty or completeness of "the body" as a whole.

And between individuals in both these classes how frequent have been the conversations and correspondences of the most delightful character, in which feelings and convictions have been exchanged that have demonstrated to them their glorious unity in Christ, and left them full of desire to draw all Christians into a brotherhood which would be manifest both to themselves and to the world.

Of late years the yearning for union has been profoundly strengthened by a sense of the common peril to evangelical Christianity, not only from the rapid growth of sacerdotalism

in the Established Church and of Romanist intrigues in the community and the State, but also from the invasion of our shores by the Roman Catholic orders recently ejected by France to save her life.

To some remarkable illustrations of federal Christian union, both in England and America, we may now fittingly refer.

After the occupation of the Philippine Islands by the United States in 1898, the various American Evangelical Missionary Societies beginning work in the group,[1] feeling themselves strongly impelled to present a united front to the Roman Catholic and semi-heathen population, mutually agreed to federate as an evangelical union. The missionaries then jointly arranged their respective spheres of labour, and now they meet annually for consultation in the interests of the common cause.

Such brotherly harmony must have profoundly impressed the many races in the islands who have for centuries been exploited and terrorised by the grasping and immoral friars.[2] But what a scandal would have been created had each denomination begun to work independently and utterly regardless of the rest!

The same delightful spectacle of union and co-operation between evangelical missionaries now presents itself in almost every missionary field. In India and China great missionary conferences, resulting in valuable practical conclusions, and every way stimulating to the Christlike toilers, are now periodically held. Everywhere the missionaries and committee of the Church Missionary Society—the greatest and most fruitful of the world's evangelisation agencies—is on terms of brotherly comity with the missionaries and boards of all the other evangelical organisations; their attitude in

[1] Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, United Brethren, Christian and Missionary Alliance, together with representatives of two Bible Societies and the Y.M.C.A.

[2] See *U.S. Senate Document* 190, *Church Lands in the Philippines.*

this respect contrasting strongly with that of the High Church Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

As a consequence, Hindoos, Mohammedans, Buddhists, Confucianists and others see only variety in unity among the numerous denominational missionary bodies, but nothing at all like the shameful division of our home forces.

Perhaps the most gratifying development of Christian union in the United Kingdom in recent years has been the federation of the various Free Church denominations. As the largest illustration, thus far, of the practicability of evangelical union for common ends, without any sacrifice of principle or denominational liberty, it is to be hoped it has duly impressed all those unhopeful souls who regard reunion of the denominations as visionary and Utopian. It speaks well for the enlightenment of the English Free Church leaders that the alliance of their denominations—like the political union between Great Britain and her colonies—was based on the true federal principle: absolute non-interference with the self-government and other internal affairs of any of the uniting bodies.

Its evangelistic mission work alone has more than justified the existence of the Free Church Federation. If it has not fulfilled all the sanguine anticipations of its friends, the limitations of its constitution and scope which were deliberately planned by its founders and promoters must be borne in mind.

(*a*) Unlike the New Testament community, it excludes by its title one very large and important tribe in the Christian Israel: the Anglican Church. "O Lord, the God of Israel, why is this come to pass in Israel, that there should be to-day one tribe lacking in Israel?"[1]

(*b*) Unlike it also, its area of organisation is the nation, instead of the city. True, it has local branches, but the branches do not form their whole Church membership into

[1] Jud. xxi. 3.

one body jointly electing departmental committees. Each local branch is governed by representatives of its Churches, elected or appointed by the latter *for all purposes*—a system which is the direful spring of so many melancholy failures of general as distinguished from *ad hoc* administrative bodies.

In the nature of things, therefore, the federation could not be expected to yield the marvellous results which can flow only from "the Ecclesia of God," the divinely planned union in every locality of *all* the members of "the body," "holding fast the Head"; let us, however, be deeply thankful to an overruling Providence that it has done so much to pave the way to that blessed and long-desired consummation! Meantime, it must be admitted on all hands that the Free Church Federation has in many localities strenuously endeavoured to unite the forces of righteousness against prevailing evils, and in various other ways impressed the public mind by its large, fraternal, truly patriotic spirit.

Let us now consider (*a*) a few of the many things which, we cannot doubt, would be achieved by the union for which Christ so earnestly and repeatedly prayed;[1] also (*b*) some of the lines along which it might advantageously operate and afford light and leading to the community at large. [1]

Anti-Demoralisation.—The widespread age-long Christian yearning that the world may yet see a far higher and nobler type of Christianity would unquestionably be realised by local Christian federation. Roman Catholics, Unitarians, Jews, Agnostics and men of the world, who now taunt us with our divisions, could not but be impressed by the spectacle of Christian federation, and the elevating and purifying influences which would flow from it. To thus "behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity"[2] would do much to take away the "veil" that "lieth upon their heart".[3] [2] [3]

[1] John xvii. 11, 21, 22, 23. [2] Ps. cxxxiii. 1. [3] 2 Cor. iii. 15.

The necessity for high character in Christians as "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world" is indeed obvious in every field of human activity. Take, for example, the many ethical questions affecting trade practices, social usages, [1] and political methods and policies,[1] on which not a few Church members go astray who are not trained to study such problems in the light of Scripture laws and principles. As a consequence, we see a comparatively low moral standard in the lives of many Christians. In the case, too, of many great movements and reforms, there is a distressing failure to create and organise the Christian public opinion which would carry all before it. And thus, humanly speaking, there is little prospect of speedily overthrowing the many gigantic evils and abuses which are either entrenched in vested interest, have the sanction of law, or are shielded by the equally formidable inertia, connivance, or open support of one or both of the political parties.

If, however, an Anti-Demoralisation Committee were formed in each Ecclesia to discuss such questions from the Scripture

[1] There is a practice, often unthinkingly resorted to by religious societies, which is unquestionably open to objection on moral grounds, and which would probably soon vanish in the atmosphere of principle which would be formed by "Ecclesias of God". To ask the mayor of a city, in his official capacity, to take the chair at an evangelical conference, is to place a non-partisan public officer in a false position—necessitating his helping both good and bad causes. If he complies with the request, then next day, should another group of citizens ask him, *qua* impartial mayor, to preside at a meeting in aid of Roman Catholic propaganda, he cannot justly refuse. But if he is deeply convinced that the distinctive teaching of Roman Catholicism is false and injurious, how can he conscientiously aid its religious work? As a matter of fact, the vast majority of mayors try to run two consciences: the public one boldly helping causes which the private one would not touch with a pair of tongs! Surely the true course for mayors *in their official capacity* is as completely to eschew religious functions as, by common consent, they now do those of party politics; and, just as surely, the proper course for Christian organisations is to abstain from tempting them into a custom which must impel them, as fair-dealing men, to prostitute publicly their office. There is obviously nothing of course to prevent mayors *in their private capacity* from performing any religious function or duty that may be near their heart; for no mayoralty or other official position can deprive any man of his rights or responsibilities to God as an *individual* for his precept and example.

standpoint, and thereby produce a united Christian conviction in favour of vital reforms, then a large section of public opinion would probably support the non-partisan proposals; and the politicians, finding they had a body to reckon with which they dare not ignore, would bid against each other for its support by strenuous efforts to carry its measures.

We should not forget that every Scripture principle which Christians induce the community to recognise and establish, as a *chose jugée*, in social usage, law or national policy is a permanent gain to the world; and that if, during past centuries, there had been Christian Ecclesias jointly and persistently labouring thus to disseminate these truths of God, the Western nations, doubtless, ere this, would have developed religious and civil liberty, righteous administration and pure social ethics in many more beneficent forms.[1] Unquestionably, every past great reform was carried because it heralded some law of God; indeed we cannot safely affirm that a nation has made definitive progress on any moral question until it has grasped, fought out, and finally enthroned its underlying divine principle. 1

But even after a reform has been achieved, continual vigilance is necessary "that we lose not the things which we have wrought".[2] What can better stimulate this than a sense of the preciousness of these dearly bought principles, and a resolve, at all costs, to "hold fast that which is good"?[3] Who could better safeguard such moral gains than Christian committees elected in each city for the purpose? For lack of them, on the colour question for example, both party cabinets have, during the last quarter of a century, been allowed to sanction the continuance of slavery in the Zanzibar pro- 2 3

[1] Since penning the foregoing sentences, the writer has had the gratification of reading Dr. Forsyth's exceedingly able address, as chairman of the Congregational Union, on "A Holy Church the Moral Guide of Society" (*British Weekly*, 18th May, 1905). May he live to see a wider auditory for such thoughts than that furnished by a single denomination!

[2] 2 John 8. [3] 1 Thess. v. 21.

tectorate, with the result of searing the national conscience and lowering its whole standard of righteousness and justice towards subject races. And thus the proud boast of our younger days, "The British flag cannot float over a slave," has been little heard of late; and unspeakable atrocities have been allowed to go on in Turkey, the Congo basin and Angola for many years.

Our national decadence as regards the great principle of *religious* liberty is equally evidenced by the fact that Lord Cromer and Sir Frederick Lugard have, with complete immunity, prohibited the preaching of the Gospel in Mohammedan countries within their respective spheres. (See p. 191, *note*.)

A great apostolic principle which needs clearest re-teaching by Christian Ecclesias in our own day, in every centre of population, is that it is wrong to render unto Cæsar the things which are God's, or, in other words, to obey men rather than
1 God.[1] We too soon forget that the prophets and apostles, and also the martyrs of succeeding ages, purchased our most precious liberties by loyally obeying the righteous laws of God at the cost of a direct disobedience of the wicked laws
2 and edicts of men.[2]

EDUCATION.—Anything more unchristian, or better calculated to make Christianity a byword to men of the world, than the war of sects and strife of tongues into which the whole country has been plunged by the Education Act of
3 1902[3] it would be difficult to conceive.

[1] Luke xx. 25.

[2] For apostolic examples, see p. 128, *note*. See also 2 Chron. xviii. 7-27; Dan. iii. 16-18; Heb. xi. 23-40.

[3] The volcanic eruption in this case has, however, been only *unusually* severe. Times without number, from the very inception of the national education movement by Bell (Anglican) and Lancaster (Nonconformist) a hundred years ago, State Churchmen and Free Churchmen have, on educational questions, fought each other from opposing camps: England being thereby thrown far behind America and Germany in the international educational race.

If the only result of refounding the New Testament Brotherhood were the formation, in every town, of an interdenominational committee for mutual counsel and co-operation to secure a just and beneficent solution of the religious education problem, it would abundantly justify the step.

Forty years ago the writer's honoured father often remarked in discussions on the education question: "The people of England have made up their mind that the day scholar shall have religious teaching, and they are right; but it cannot be given him by the State".[1]

Now if a Christian atmosphere is an inestimable power for good, if also it is right and wise for the State to control the education of its children, there must be a practical way to combine these two seemingly incommensurate principles. The religion excluders, however, with melancholy lack of faith, tell us no such way exists; so they make a desolation and call it "peace". But if their secular non-Christian system is to be paid for out of the rates, that will probably provoke more passive resistance than anything we have hitherto seen.

The practical moral of past errors seems to clearly be: (*a*) that "peace on earth among men of good-will" is "a more excellent way" than endless sectarian controversy in the public press; (*b*) that the Christians of each centre of population, recognising their joint membership of "the body of Christ," should come together "in the Spirit" to open-mindedly investigate, and fearlessly give effect to, the Chris-

[1] When we reflect that mental instruction may, like money or music, be made an instrument of either good or evil, we are reminded of the Duke of Wellington's half-truth—"Education without Bible teaching makes clever devils". Certainly, all thoughtful Christians whose experience has shown them the inherent limitations of Sunday schools and Sunday school teaching, must dread any settlement of the national education question which would leave the day schools with secular teaching only. Not very many years ago, when an effort was made in Manchester to bring about joint periodical Scripture examinations of its Evangelical Protestant Sunday scholars, it was discovered that less than 5 per cent. of them were tested in Bible knowledge by outside examination!

tian principles underlying this divisive but profoundly important question.

Inasmuch as evangelical Anglicans and Free Churchmen have for many decades laboured harmoniously together in ragged schools, city missions, evangelistic missions and foreign missions; as, moreover, a scheme of Christian teaching, drafted jointly by leading Anglicans and Free Churchmen, was employed continuously and without question in the board schools of many large towns up to the time when the boards were dissolved, there cannot be a doubt that thoroughly representative conferences, meeting for "the glory of Christ" and the spiritual well-being of the children, would be unerringly guided to a most fruitful and gratifying
[1] solution of this perplexing problem.[1]

CHURCH AND SUNDAY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE.—A few years ago an alleged serious falling off, both in Church and Sunday school attendance, caused profound apprehension in many thoughtful minds. The practical questions suggest themselves, whether the conventional systems and modes of work of the denominations are the best available for commending "the truth as it is in Jesus" to the multitudes of old and young around us; and whether, in presence of other indications of "something rotten in the State of Denmark," it would not be the most statesmanlike course to bring Christians everywhere into council and encourage them to frankly criticise, and make constructive suggestions in regard to, our
[2] present-day Church and Sunday school régime.[2]

Christian Ecclesias would be certain to exert their whole influence in favour of the Sunday school; with the result

[1] Meantime, to the many education schemes already proposed, the writer ventures to add another which, though providing for municipal control and for unrestricted religious teaching by the denominations out of their rates and taxes would, he believes, leave the rights of the most sensitive conscience uninfringed (see Appendix B, p. 321).

[2] Assisted, so far as Sunday school questions are concerned, by such organisations as the Sunday School Union.

probably of raising the spiritual standard of the teacher, of inducing many Churches and Church members to take a direct interest in the work, and of promoting conventions which would bring the workers together for mutual improvement and the adoption of the wisest and most progressive systems and methods.

Amongst other subjects, the question of "lay" preaching and the still unsolved problem of how to hold the Sunday scholars when they get well up into their "teens," press for exhaustive investigation. Certainly no system, however time-honoured, should be allowed to remain which in any branch of effort tends to obstruct, or fails to give free course to, the work of the Holy Spirit. A federal union of the denominations should obviously afford every facility for addresses and discussions by the members on these and many other profoundly important subjects.

Children's Services.—Many parents and Church members are of opinion that the spiritual needs of the children are not adequately met by our ordinary Church services, and that special children's gatherings should be more generally instituted for them.

This question and the further one—whether it is desirable to make arrangements for periodically holding children's meetings such as are now promoted at uncertain intervals by the Children's Special Service Mission—might be satisfactorily dealt with by an appropriate committee, empowered to organise such gatherings and to enlist the help of parents, teachers and others.

Missionary and Evangelisation Work.—It cannot for a moment be doubted that the restoration of the Ecclesia Local would be the signal for a great and general uprising of souls to further to the utmost that work which is the most important in the world and which is ever upon the heart of Christ: "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations,

baptising them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you
[1] alway, even unto the end of the world".[1]

It is unspeakably sad to read the numerous appeals for more labourers, and for prayer, from single-handed missionaries in fields so "white unto harvest" that their exhaustion in efforts to overtake the work is bringing many of them to premature graves.

Might we not reasonably hope that the love for Christ and perishing souls would be greatly increased by the Ecclesia atmosphere; and that the number of those, whose broad-minded sympathies impel them to contribute to the missionary work of many denominations, would be so multiplied that the toilers in the field would cease to conclude we are "only playing at missionary work". Every Ecclesia would be sure to have a Foreign Missions Committee which would feel itself resistlessly impelled to stimulate both denominational and interdenominational missionary work, and to promote periodical conferences and meetings with that object; the Ecclesias (as in Paul's day, in the matter of "the collection for the
[2] saints"[2]) vying with each other in the liberality of their gifts to the blessed cause.

A Home Evangelisation Committee would promote both congregational and interdenominational evangelisation meetings, and would stimulate the local Churches to organise the shepherding of the converts who gave themselves to Christ.

Joint evangelistic work by the Christians of a city would do much to reap the wondrous results foreshadowed by Christ's feeding of the multitudes. The people would all be fed by the rapidly multiplying bread of life; and each effort would leave not only its "twelve baskets full" of blessing on the
[3] *various denominations*[3] who had participated in the work, but

[1] Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. [2] 2 Cor. viii. 1-15. [3] See pp. 148, 152 *seq.*

also its "seven baskets full" of *complete*[1] resources for commencing a new campaign.[2]

THE DEFENCE OF TRUTH.—The Christian public opinion which would be created by interdenominational union would probably give pause to over-confident college professors, pulpit philosophers and Sunday school teachers who—recklessly ignoring the solemn warning of Christ in Matt. xviii. 6, 7[3]—propound ill-digested and one-sided conclusions based so frequently on unwarranted assumptions.

In connection with the press various grave developments are now demanding the most vigilant and intelligent treatment which could be brought to bear upon them by a united Christian community.

Pernicious teaching and misrepresentation of Christian facts and doctrines are not unfrequently disseminated in newspapers and from public platforms which (because "everybody's business is nobody's business") are often allowed to go by default.

It is matter of common knowledge that the independence of the press has of late years been so extensively undermined by the Roman Catholic propaganda that there are now few British newspapers left which have the courage to insert facts reflecting in any way upon that denomination or its hierarchy.

Whole newspapers, once high-principled and courageous, have in recent years been bought up by plutocrats and trusts and prostituted by them to their sordid ends.

A further kindred evil is that many Christians take their views on important public questions largely from newspapers, many of which not only advocate grossly materialistic and unchristian policies, but, as tools of the political parties, often wrest the facts underlying a controversy in the most unscrupulous way, thereby converting numbers even of their Christian readers into prejudiced partisans. Ecclesias, how-

[1] See p. 67 *seq.* [2] Mark viii. 18-21. [3] See also Rom. xiv. 1.

ever, having their own organs, and bringing out front-rank conscientious contributors to them and (wherever practicable) to the general press, would do much to break the spell of these evil influences. Moreover, as one of their great objects would be to induce their members (in accordance with the principle of Matt. x. 37, 38) to vow to support the candidate, of whatever party, who would promote the most advanced Christian policy and legislation, it is probable that the advocacy of unscrupulous policies and legislation by the newspapers themselves would be materially checked on finding them condemned by the most weighty, honourable and influential section of their readers.

TAKING THE INITIATIVE.—Important crises often arise in public affairs, involving moral, social or political questions, upon which it is most desirable there should be immediate counsel and action by Christians. At present every denomination naturally hesitates to take the lead on questions which equally interest all. But, with Christian union, the ground would be covered by departmental committees, each of which would at once move on any matter arising within its sphere.

Men of high calibre would doubtless also be detached from their present functions, and appointed by the associated
1 Ecclesias[1] to address great meetings throughout the country, to rouse the nation to demand the abolition of our numerous crying law-abetted evils at home and abroad. There are doubtless many Wilberforces, Shaftesburys, Cobdens, Brights, Plimsolls, Livingstones and McKenzies in the community, on whom the Spirit of the Lord would be mightily outpoured, if only they were liberated and commissioned for such noble
2 work.[2]

[1] 2 Cor. viii. 19.

[2] "The truth is that the nation needs nothing more seriously at this moment than an organised means of developing and giving voice to its better conscience. There is a whole group of questions that press for solution, but will never receive

PEACEMAKING.—A most urgent desideratum in every city to-day is a body of Christian peacemakers, men of high reputation, elected severally by the denominations, and possessing those qualities of head, heart and conscience which would eminently qualify them to bring about peaceful relations, on just, true and wise lines, between Christian or non-Christian individuals or sections of the community at issue, and who agree to seek their good offices as arbitrators.

A few years of the beneficent work of an Ecclesia committee, thus constituted, would probably inspire so much confidence that it might become a general practice in disputes between employers and employed to refer to them as arbitrators in case of dispute; with the happy result (experienced by those manufacturing and mercantile firms whose sale, purchase and other contract notes contain an agreement for *commercial*, not legal, arbitration) that when a question arises between the parties the moral effect of the proviso is to induce sober, peaceful negotiation and obviate that most dangerous of all developments, "firing the blood". The effect, upon Christians themselves, of an agreement to refer all their disputes to a Conciliation and Arbitration Committee, would be a direct practical recognition of the equality and fraternity enjoined by Christ. That would, in turn, lead to many mutual kindly deeds tending to largely realise His words: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another".[1]

The committee would doubtless do its utmost to educate the community generally into just and statesmanlike views on international questions and disputes, and to urge the

definite Government attention for want of adequate public opinion. That public opinion should be educated, fostered, interpreted and marshalled by the Christian Church. . . . If the Christian Church had a more sensitive and better educated conscience and could speak with something like a collective voice, it would do wonders for the bettering of the world" ("Quartus" in *Manchester Guardian*, 15th June, 1906).

[1] John xiii. 35.

Government to *timely action in accordance therewith*, thus averting the causes of war. In this way the Ecclesias of Britain (aided by the King who has already done so much in the cause of peace) and of the United States (whose President has so greatly distinguished himself in this field) would probably, by joint action, impel their Governments to initiate a high court of the nations, comprised of judicial representatives of all or a great majority of the Powers, acting magisterially for the common good, and resolved to end the arbitrament of war, by inducing all nations to sign arbitration treaties binding them to keep the peace. Under this régime all international disputes would go before a completely competent and impartial tribunal, whose decisions, supported by the moral power and influence of the nations, would have the force of international law. If, notwithstanding these high sanctions, the finding of the tribunal were in any case deliberately ignored, then every effort would forthwith be made by the law-abiding nations to bring the defaulting Government to reason. But if all such moral pressure proved to be without avail, the recalcitrant Government would next be judicially condemned to outlawry; and, finally, in the last issue, if need be, the magisterial decision would be carried into effect by the united sea and land forces of the law-respecting Powers, acting as an international police.[1]

CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE.—Few will be disposed to question the valuable work done by our local Churches, both as morally elevating and spiritually regenerating agencies, in their several districts. In the nature of things, however, they have their limitations. As detached organisations, only *mystically* united to the other Churches of their city, they undoubtedly

[1] Since these lines were penned the Hague Conference has sat for months and closed with disappointing results. The practical lesson is the formation of Christian Ecclesias in every city to (*inter alia*) create such a public opinion as would impel the Powers and their representatives to do something much more substantial in the cause of Peace than play at international conferences.

tend to foster the village spirit and, too often, to produce internal cliques.

Being in most cases comparatively small bodies, they, to that extent, tend to circumscribe the Christian acquaintanceship and friendship of their members and, unfortunately also, the social intercourse of their families. In consequence, those parents who yearn above all things for a Christian atmosphere and Christian alliances for their sons and daughters often have the unspeakable unhappiness of seeing them drawn away from their small Church circles into undesirable associations and finally into marriage with those of no Christian sympathies.

Now it may be taken as certain that an Ecclesia would bring the members of the denominations together in council on many important practical questions. Amongst the latter would be the best methods of leading young minds and hearts to Christ, of saturating them with Bible truths and principles, of training them to abstinence from prevailing vices and evil habits, and of enlisting them, under able and experienced Christian leaders, in all kinds of Christian and philanthropic effort, suitable to their age, bent and capacity.

The meeting together of the young workers would thus enlarge their circle of high-principled acquaintance. And as the result, friendships would be formed which would, in many cases, eventuate in life unions of an elevating and mutually helpful character. Similar healthful influences and ultimate happy marriage would likewise be the lot of many of the young people who, under the tutelage of such workers, would be drawn together in the pure atmosphere of institutions designed for their highest good. Joint conferences of district workers in each branch of Christian enterprise would still further increase the number of spiritually stimulating personal friendships.

With the best hearts and intellects of the denominations placed at its disposal, a city union of Christians would un-

questionably be led of the Holy Spirit to devise many wise and intelligent plans for bringing the young of both sexes together in ennobling work as well as in morally and physically healthful recreation.

HELP FOR STRUGGLING CAUSES.—The establishment of a local union of all believers could not fail to influence for good every Christian congregation in a city, and especially those Churches whose spiritual life had sunk to a low ebb. If one such member suffered, all the members would suffer with it. There would be joint earnest prayer for the failing cause; and the possible remedy, often so helpful in such cases, of a series of evangelistic meetings might be suggested and adopted to bring back the lost life and power. The services of a permanent Evangelisation Committee, with its register of approved and gifted evangelists, would here come into needed play. Heavily burdened Churches, in the lowest districts of a city, would get a new release of life from the practical sympathy of the richer suburban Churches directed to them through the medium of the Ecclesia.[1] On the same principle, a Members' Aid Committee (following the precedent of Acts vi.) would raise a fund to assist, on the wisest practical lines, sick and disabled Ecclesia members in need of help. Under our existing separatist system, various toiling and little known, but none the less praiseworthy, religious or philanthropic organisations often find it difficult to get a hearing. But if the promoters were able to submit a strong *prima facie* case for sympathy and help to an appropriate Ecclesia committee, the latter would feel impelled to thoroughly investigate and then, if

[1] The segregation of the rich and the poor in separate Churches is a serious evil. It is equally bad for both classes—giving no play for the sympathies, leaving many poor struggling Churches unhelped, and doing little to narrow the gulf between poor and rich, which is such a widely lamented feature of our modern civilisation. Would it be an exaggeration to say that the ministers of most of the Churches without poor would probably be happier men if they were producing macadam on the public roads?

satisfied, to assist by convening a meeting in aid or otherwise.

Charity Organisation.—The organisation of charity by co-ordinating the work of the legion of charitable societies, strengthening the deserving ones in need of help, and doing away with overlapping, might be greatly assisted by a Charity Organisation Committee elected by the members of the denominations. The demoralisation resulting from half a dozen people or churches unwittingly relieving the same persons is too notorious to need further comment. With regard to the problem of the unemployed and of the able-bodied pauper, the Salvation Army's solution and that of others, based on the principle of getting the people on to the land, could, along with all other hopeful proposals, be exhaustively discussed and investigated by such a committee, the best systems arrived at being then energetically promoted. Concurrently, every effort would doubtless be made to obtain Christian legislation to stop *the ceaseless manufacture* of fresh drunkards, paupers and criminals, and to make the penal system increasingly regenerative rather than punitive.

Christian Engineering.—The sphere for Christlike effort in our cities, outside the present activities of the denominations, is so wide and so imperfectly worked by ragged schools, city missions, refuges, rescue homes, temperance societies, bands of hope, lads' clubs, Christian endeavour societies, adult schools, social settlements, and a host of other beneficent but largely unco-ordinated agencies, that the toilers in them are often oppressed by the thought, "What are these among so many?"[1] In an Ecclesia atmosphere, however, their [1] *power*, if not their number, would be indefinitely increased. In "the name of the Lord of hosts" they would *jointly* resolve and plan, as spiritual engineers, to carry the citadels of poverty and vice which in every town are now mocking the advance

[1] John vi. 9.

of "civilisation". Many of these workers for Christ, in our acres upon acres of slums, have thought profoundly on the remedies which a really Christian civilisation could bring to bear; and their fellow Christians would do well to regard them as specialists and authorities on the problem how to fulfil the prophecy: "They of the city shall flourish like [1] grass of the earth".[1] Assured thus of the moral and material support of the Ecclesia membership, they could not only mutually rearrange their present work to abolish overlapping, and perfect their measures for spiritually, physically and socially regenerating the poverty-stricken and degraded, but could also promote legislation against the many licensed temptations to drink, gambling and vice, which are now so ruthlessly undermining their efforts.

Amongst these promoters of reforms there would be many gifted and earnest men who would feel it to be their duty to advocate personally, in the council chamber or the senate, the movements they have so much at heart. Led by such men, great meetings, carrying resolutions calling on Parliament to remove some crying evil or abuse, would go far to convince it of the depth and earnestness of the national feeling on the subject, and impel it to apply the remedy.

With the present congeries of *isolated* sects, how slow is the progress of any great philanthropic reform; and what an enormous amount of effort and money has to be expended in undermining prejudice, and winning over, not only the community, but often Christians themselves, to the right and true view. It is notorious that many toilsome and yet most urgently needed crusades get very little Church help, albeit their chief leaders and workers are Christians! A policeman once remarked to Charles Garrett: "If you Christians would only agree, you could have Sunday closing in six months". Commenting on this, Hugh Price Hughes well observed:

[1] Ps. lxxii. 16.

"There is no conceivable reform that the Christian conscience demands which would not be conceded by any Government in Westminster, if we were united in our request".

But not only are there many philanthropic reforms which the Christian community is bound to promote and advocate, there are widespread social and political movements which need the most enlightened leadership and guidance. The great democratic upheaval which, like a rising tide, is finding its way slowly and surely to the foundations of all governmental institutions, must be controlled by Christian engineers if we are not to have a mere change of masters; if "the powers that be" are to be constrained to rule and legislate on Christian principles; if, in short, the glorious prediction is to be realised— "the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day".[1] [1]

A Christian Exchange.—If Christians, as "sons of God," are an eternal brotherhood, why should not those in the same city come out of their denominational caves and begin to know each other here and now? The New Testament tells us wondrous things about the communion of saints. What could better promote this feast of reason and flow of soul than a New Testament Ecclesia?

Many eminent followers of the Master would readily testify that their love, charity, breadth of view and Christian optimism have been immeasurably strengthened by contact with members of other denominations.

And, just as a city exchange enables merchants and manufacturers to transact business and mutually communicate news of commercial and industrial development, so an Ecclesia house, with its conversation rooms, meeting and conference halls, committee rooms, reading rooms, library, and other appropriate modern equipment, would provide the Christians of a city with a spiritual exchange of the utmost practical value.

[1] Isa. ii. 11, 17.

As a common rendezvous for the members of the denominations, it would directly promote intercourse and interchange of view and outlook, and might thus in many instances become the birthplace of great missionary and other enterprise for the extension of the kingdom on earth.

If union is strength, then the increased "good works," on every hand, which would result from the "members of Christ" working together in harmony and peace, would soon demonstrate to the world how much more it owes to Him than to material progress and civilisation. To say that *organic* union is visionary, and that *mystical* union only is possible between the tribes of the Christian Israel, whilst men of the world (often with antagonistic interests) are uniting or federating in numberless directions, is to libel the power of Christ's grace over the human heart. No! Let us ask and believe that His prayer for our actual union may so soon be fulfilled in every city that this, the last century of the twenty, may witness its most glorious outcome—the Gospel spreading throughout the world, as in the first, by geometrical instead of arithmetical progression!

A CHRISTIAN HIVE.—The multiform gifts which the divine Head has bestowed on the members of "the Ecclesia, which is His body,"[1] and which are so vividly depicted in 1 Cor. xii., xiii., xiv., have assuredly ample scope in its sphere of operations for all their highest energies and powers. Their fitting correlate, too, is the world of work awaiting every Ecclesia feeling itself impelled to live the life of Him who "went about doing good," and which confronts us immediately we attempt to draw up a list of departmental committees to cover the field of effort.

As the scheme of "suggested by-laws for a large Ecclesia" in Chapter XI. outlines, in considerable detail, what might be done by a number of such elected bodies, it is unnecessary to pursue this thought further at the moment.

[1] Eph. i. 22, 23; Col. ii. 19.

How much the power for good of the Ecclesias of the various towns would be increased by that co-operation of their committees for common ends, which is certain to follow their formation, a moment's reflection will show. National (and international) conferences would no doubt be held from time to time by identical or cognate committees to promote their specific objects; and thus a vast representative organisation, with ramifications in every district, and appealing powerfully, by its pure, beneficent, non-partisan aims, not only to Christians but to all true patriots and philanthropists, would be immediately available for the promotion of every great and true reform.

Probably no thoughtful Christian will dispute that our disunion as Christians would cease if we were supremely loyal to Christ; that it is His will and intense desire that we should reunite *now* on apostolic lines; and that if we, too, honestly desire union we will begin by practically counting the cost.

Realising that sect and party have become to a large extent our masters and tyrants, the very symbols of our separatism, we will ask ourselves—Are we prepared to relegate them to their proper sphere, *i.e.*, to subordinate their demands to Christ's claims on our allegiance, whenever they conflict with it? "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."[1] If, then, the ties of *blood* rank behind those of Christ, can we hesitate where to place those of sect and party? [1]

In the year 1875 a "slave circular" was issued by the British Government, directing every commander of a national vessel lying in the waters of a slave-holding country that if a slave swam off to his ship for freedom he was to be driven back, even though he were clinging to the vessel's chains The edict provoked such a storm of indignation that every-

[1] Matt. x. 37, 38.

thing was swept before it. In the course of arrangements for one of the protest meetings (in a large northern city) a rector, of strong anti-slavery sympathies, was requested to attend and address the gathering. His astounding reply that he could not, because it would condemn his political party, led the writer forthwith to vow to support, in future, the bluest Tory or the reddest Radical who would promote the most advanced Christian policy and legislation.

He feels sure he is only one of many in many centres who would wholeheartedly join a local union of Christians of every sect and party, loyally pledged to reserve their entire influence and power as citizens, for Christ; and that thereby, under Him, an *esprit de corps* would be created more powerful and more influential for good than that of any brotherhood the world has ever known. Is this conclusion correct? The fate of our country and of much else hangs upon our attitude to the principle involved. It is no uncommon thing to hear of men altering their views of national policy and changing their political party. But the true course for Christians is to hold themselves continuously and absolutely free to "follow [1] the Lamb whithersoever he goeth," [1] *i.e.*, to support the party whose policy for the time being is most in line with the principles of His Word. This is a small sacrifice to ask of any man for whom his Redeemer has sacrificed so much; and yet, if generally made by Christians, it would produce immeasurable results in its influence both on the political parties and the world at large.

Should the question be raised—What will reunion otherwise involve?—Will it prejudicially affect the existing arrangements of the denominations? A little consideration of the principles of the constitution of the apostolic community should remove all misgiving on such points. We have seen that the restored Ecclesia would in effect be a Christian Zion,

[1] Rev. xiv. 4.

a federal union of all the tribes or denominations of Christians in its city; that every denomination would retain its complete autonomy and self-rule in all things affecting its internal administration and work; that in matters of common interest and concern, the business of which would be better done jointly than severally, the denominations would act together as a unit; that their agents or instruments for such work would be the directly, proportionally and periodically elected departmental committees; that New Testament principles and precedents indicate the classes of work which such committees might advantageously undertake;[1] that a Joint Board, [1] composed of the chairmen of the committees, could conduct the necessary official business of the organisation as a whole; and that a Referendum Council and Referendum could deal with all urgent questions arising outside the spheres of the committees, but nevertheless within the scope of the Ecclesia.

We further saw that, in numberless Christian institutions and enterprises at home and in missionary operations abroad, Free Churchmen and evangelical Anglicans are, to-day, working harmoniously together uninfluenced by sectarianism or party spirit.

If the greatness of the task of confronting ages of tradition and prescription should, however, make our hearts sink within us, we have only (*a*) to gird our loins "with truth," *i.e.*, with the certainty that the union of the members of His body is infinitely desired by Christ; (*b*) to assure ourselves that He has planned for practical union by the apostolic organisation; and (*c*), whilst ceaselessly maintaining an open mind towards Scripture evidence as to the real character of that organisation, to resolve meantime, in His name, to re-erect His community on the basal principles which underlaid it at its inception, to the full extent of our agreement upon them and with the sanctified experience of nearly nineteen centuries behind us.

[1] The committee of Acts vi., by the way, illustrates its physical, and that of Acts xiii. its spiritual, philanthropy.

That resolve will nevertheless be vain without the importunate prayer of faith, for we are plainly told that "Without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing unto" God; and that, in short, His power to bless us is in direct proportion to our belief in and expectation from Him.

We read that Christ "could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. [1] And he marvelled at their unbelief."[1]

To the sorrowing father, bringing his demoniac son and imploring Him "if thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us," He responded with the challenge—"If [2] thou canst! All things are possible to him that believeth;"[2] and, shortly afterwards, said to His unbelieving disciples: "Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible [3] unto you".[3]

We know, too, that the condition precedent of the marvellous outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost was that "all with one [4] accord" had "continued stedfastly in prayer";[4] but we must also remember the profoundly suggestive fact that the blessing [5] descended when "they were all together in one place".[5] In like manner we—by jointly wrestling with God, or, rather, by being wrestled with *by Him*, for His guidance and blessing on our effort to bring "all together" in Christ's name —will beyond question receive His answer: "Thou hast [6] striven with God and with men and hast prevailed".[6]

We all know that the distinguishing feature of the Welsh revivals was, throughout, their continuous, believing, united and therefore prevailing prayer. If *at the first* few throw in their lot with us, we need only recall the Galilæan beginnings of the Saviour's mighty work and remember His assurance: "Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth

[1] Mark vi. 5, 6. [2] Mark ix. 22, 23. [3] Matt. xvii. 20.
[4] Acts i. 14. [5] Acts ii. 1; see also iv. 24, 31. [6] Gen. xxxii. 24-28.

as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."[1]

The record of the long centuries of tragedy, caused by the great "falling away"[2] from apostolic principles and practice, has been "written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come".[3] At least, then, on all the Christian communities of recently formed nations, such as the United States, Canada and Australia, let not the lessons of history, written with the blood of saints, be thrown away; in every renascent land (like Japan), in every missionary field and every new colony, let the apostolic organisation be planted forthwith.

One thought in conclusion. The Holy Spirit who created and sustained the Welsh revival movement; who, in the measure of "the prayer of faith," will shower blessing on every part of the kingdom; who, were we "one body in Christ,"[4] could give us continual revival harvests instead of one in many decades, is He whom Christ tells us "shall guide" us "into all the truth". Let us now, therefore, yielding ourselves to the transfiguring influence of this great outpouring of "truth in love," discharge all prejudice against that visible union of His members for which He so intensely and repeatedly prayed. In His name, in every centre of population, let us crystallise the love which distinguishes each true revival into a federal union of all the denominations "holding fast the Head".[5] Moved by the Spirit of God, let us not rest till, in every place, the "sheep" have come together as "the flock of God," till the "living stones" are "fitly framed together" into "a habitation of God," till "the tribes of the Lord" have reconstituted "the temple of God".

That the world then, everywhere beholding us "perfected

[1] Matt. xviii. 19, 20. [2] 2 Thess. ii. 3. [3] 1 Cor. x. 11.
[4] Rom. xii. 5. [5] Col. ii. 19.

into one," "may know" that Christ was sent of God;[1] that He thereby may "see of the travail of his soul" and "be satisfied,"[2] let the cry go forth: "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city".[3] "Take ye no rest, and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth."[4]

[1] John xvii. 23.
[2] Isa. liii. 11.
[3] Isa. lii. 1.
[4] Isa. lxii. 7.

CHAPTER XI

SUGGESTED BY-LAWS FOR A LARGE ECCLESIA

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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

IT is the glory of "the body of Christ"[1] that, in the [1]
nature of things, it can have no head but Himself.

In the foregoing pages an endeavour has been made to show that the Ecclesia is at once a city federation of spiritual

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 27.

tribes or denominations, a group or family of directly and proportionally elected departmental committees, and a general constituency of individual members, all working into each others' hands under their divine Head and King. We have seen that the work of this seemingly complex community is co-ordinated by recognising the separate sphere of each of its tribes, committees and members, and by promoting the varied, energetic and harmonious action of all, on the fundamental principle of their joint membership of "the body".

It cannot, however, be too clearly borne in mind that whilst that principle is vital—inasmuch as *inter alia* it safeguards in all governmental relations the liberty, equality and fraternity of the members which was so clearly enjoined by Christ—yet the *form* in which it may be embodied may vary as widely as do the minds of communities and nations.

From this it results that any detailed practical scheme by a single mind for organising a local union of the denominations on apostolic lines must be taken for precisely what it is worth. That the following "suggested by-laws for a large Ecclesia" have their full measure of what other minds may regard as unwise and incongruous features there cannot be a moment's doubt.

But there is the reassuring thought that, if only the great underlying principle dominates the conception, the errors and failures of perspective in its application will be pointed out by those who will examine the structure with the searchlight both of the New Testament and of practical governmental experience. Probably the proposed by-laws will be found to err by excess rather than defect; their very large number is, however, explained by the resolve to severely test the practicability of the scheme, by confronting it with all sorts of contingencies and eventualities. It was found that provision could be made for every probable development in a rational by-law.

The particular system of proportional representation sug-

gested was devised by the writer, after much thought and under the profound conviction that a principle which is so manifestly just must be capable of a simpler practical application than those hitherto proposed.

The condition that every section of opinion (large or small) desiring representation shall put forward as many candidates as there are seats to be filled (thus making complete provision for the case of an extremely popular section) may involve, in some instances perhaps, a little sacrifice of personal feeling. The plan has, however, such important countervailing advantages that it may safely be assumed every section of opinion will have sufficient public spirit to put forward the required number of candidates. It gives all sections an equal *prima facie* status before the electors; offers every voter an equally large choice of candidates; enables him without risking his representation to vote for any member of his group; and, whilst exhibiting the total vote cast for each person, utilises for each group the *surplus* votes received by its most popular candidates.[1]

Committees of *seven* members are proposed simply because large bodies tend more to talk than work, and seven persons seem ample for all ordinary executives.

[1] Some might prefer the method of "the single transferable vote" (long advocated by Lord Avebury and Lord Courtney), under which every elector forms his own list and records his alternative choice of candidates in the order of the figure written by him opposite each name—1 indicating his first preference, 2 his second, 3 his third, and so on.

In the writer's view the objections to this method are: (1) Its complication, which would be formidable in the case of voting booths where the elector had to vote for a large number of committees; (2) its assumption that the second, third, fourth, etc., choices of some voters are of equal value to the first selections of others; (3) its fortuitous lists of candidates, and the consequent possible difficulty of getting the representatives of a group or section of opinion thus pitchforked together to work with complete harmony and efficiency. Further, some of the persons in such lists might decline to serve. Some might be chosen by other nominators. Thus, lists might be too short to secure the full representation of a section for which many votes might subsequently be cast.

This last feature should be dropped out. The "single transferable vote" has in the writer's opinion sufficiently weighty objections without it.

On the other hand, seven would obviously not represent as many shades of opinion on a question as (for example) eleven; nor, for the same reason, would it give such *early* representation to a new and rising view: only one-eleventh of the constituency, instead of one-seventh, having to be convinced to obtain for it a representative on the committee.

It need scarcely be pointed out that this system secures on every committee the equitable representation of every view: besides which the suggested Publication and Meetings Committees provide in the Ecclesia Journal and the readily convenable members' meetings the amplest arena for new ideas.

As the cardinal principle of the New Testament committee —complete control over, and therefore undivided responsibility for, the working of its department—has been discussed somewhat fully in Chapter V., its embodiment in the scheme needs only to be noted here.

The rule requiring the departmental committees to be so elected as to represent every shade of opinion [1] is necessarily modified in the case of those committees which are composed solely of denominational representatives.

For the self-nomination of each group of candidates the precedent of 1 Tim. iii. 1 may be cited. Paul there says that a man who "seeketh" the high office in the Christian community of a ruler or overseer, "desireth a good work"; and thus any person, whose experience has forced upon him the conviction that God has endued him with a certain gift, becomes responsible to Him for placing it at the disposal of the community. It is gift and integrity alone which justify candidature; nomination by others is no guarantee of these qualifications, it being notorious that in civil elections men of very mediocre stamp, log-rollers and wire-pullers have no difficulty in finding the requisite nominators.

Should, however, an able man's modesty overpower his sense of responsibility for his gift, there is of course nothing

[1] See p. 69 *seq.*

to hinder his admirers laying before him a numerously signed request that he will offer himself for candidature.

Quadrennial elections are proposed (*a*) because the proportional representation of all sections of opinion on all departmental committees, by keeping the elector and elected in touch on all questions, tends so directly to stimulate and perfect the work of administration as, to that extent, to make *frequent* elections unnecessary; (*b*) because it is only fair to representative rulers to give them reasonable time to practically demonstrate their power for good; (*c*) because it seems desirable to plan in advance for an ultimate ideal system of elections in every commonwealth, such as: Year A, Local Government elections; Year B, State elections; Year C, elections to a Federation of States; Year D, elections of Christian Communities, of Philanthropic Societies, etc.

It may be remarked that the apparently complicated voting arrangements will, on investigation, be found extremely simple: all that is required of the voter being that, on every folio of the voting book, except the last one, he shall mark a cross for the particular candidate he selects, and on such last one a similar cross for the "Yes" or "No" answer to each referendum question. The facsimile "voting guide," which he receives in advance, will familiarise him with even that modest operation.

The voting guide, voting book and other election adjuncts were planned in 1894 for the simultaneous election of a considerable number of workmen's committees at the works to which former reference has been made [1] and where they have [1] since continued to be periodically used with perfect facility.

The departmental committees suggested cover, it will be observed, a vast field of enterprise for the good of man and the glory of God. Part of this area has long been nobly worked by Christians; much of it has been explored by uncoordinated, and thus more or less wasteful, effort; but a large

[1] P. 79, *note*.

proportion has been left practically untouched because "everybody's business is nobody's business".

The committees are sketched out simply to *provisionally* cover the ground; some of them have probably too varied and comprehensive a sphere for *ad hoc* bodies; and doubtless in each town widely differing schemes would ultimately be planned.

The writer does not think any of the proposed committees invade what the denominations would regard as their own proper domain—certainly not exclusively. But if this is an unwarranted conclusion, a better choice of departmental bodies could readily be made by the various minds interested. The good offices of a Conciliation and Arbitration Committee, in deciding all questions arising between the members—excepting those of course affecting the internal affairs of the denominations—it is believed, would be warmly welcomed by the latter as those of an absolutely neutral body.

It will be seen that as a whole the committees are planned to enable them to render all the help they can to existing sound Christian and philanthropic organisations in need of it; to initiate new efforts to grapple with as yet untouched but crying evils; and, generally, to stimulate wise, concerted, harmonious and efficient work for the spiritual and temporal well-being of our fellow-men.

The various considerations pointing to the desirability of a Joint Board and of an "Annual Messenger" of the Ecclesia are dealt with on pp. 79 and 132 respectively.

Even after full provision has been made (through the departmental committees and the denominational organisations) for carrying on the multiform "good works" which an earnest and enterprising Ecclesia might undertake, and after a Joint Board has been constituted to deal with its official business, wholly unforeseen yet vitally important questions and developments will in the nature of things arise which, though outside the province both of the departmental bodies

and of the elders of the various Churches, nevertheless imperatively require to be discussed and settled by the Ecclesia. These are provided for by the Referendum Council and Referendum which are based on the apostolic precedent considered in Chapter VI.

As the Ecclesia has an elected committee for every department of its federal work, thereby enabling the constituency to give its mandate on every ordinary administrative question; and as every *extraordinary* matter is submitted specifically to the Referendum, the members are obviously in a much safer position than are those electorates which, like that of the British Parliament, entrust all subjects and questions to a general body elected for a long period on, perhaps, a single hotly contested and *ephemeral* issue.

The requirement, from applicants for Ecclesia membership, of a declaration of personal trust in Christ, God incarnate, as the all-sufficient and only Saviour from *the guilt and power of sin*, seems the one and only essential from those claiming membership of Christ's body.

Further, as no regenerate soul can be ashamed of Christ,[1] presumably no Christian will hesitate to gladly avow his trust in Him as his divine deliverer from the guilt and power of sin. Some such simple personal confession, unbelied by the life, can alone form the basis of Ecclesia membership, as it clearly seems to have done in the apostolic age.[2]

This matter should be openly and straightforwardly faced at the outset, for how "shall two walk together except they have agreed"?[3] If it be questioned whether a simple

[1] Mark viii. 38; Rom. x. 9, 10, 11; 1 John iv. 15.

[2] "What possible reason can be assigned or given why such things should not be sufficient for communion with a Church which are sufficient for eternal salvation? What ground can there be why Christians should not stand upon the same terms now which they did in the time of Christ and His apostles? . . . Without all controversy, the main inlet of all the distractions, confusions and divisions of the Christian world hath been by adding other conditions of Church communion than Christ hath done" (Stillingfleet).

[3] Amos iii. 3.

declaration of personal belief in Christ, is a sufficient test of fitness for membership of a Christian Ecclesia, we have Christ's own assurance that this heart confession is the rock on which He will build His Ecclesia, and that against the [1] latter "the gates of Hades shall not prevail".[1] When we remember that such confession makes the sinner one with Him, the "rock of ages," we at once perceive its fundamental importance. References are given below to a multitude of passages clearly showing that belief and trust in, and complete surrender to, Christ, as the only and all-sufficient Saviour from the guilt and power of sin, is the one condition of admission into the Kingdom of God, and [2] *ipso facto*, therefore, into every "Ecclesia of God".[2]

If it be objected that trust in Christ may be undermined by serious doctrinal error, and that, therefore, the true course is to require subscription to a creed, the question at once arises —What was the attitude of Christ and His apostles towards "heresy"? We all know people who, through ignorance of the Scriptures and intimate contact with eloquent but shallow propagandists, have with the best intentions gone wrong on important doctrines. Now whilst there is the [3] [4] clearest evidence that Christ [3] and His apostles [4] excommunicated Ecclesia members for persistent shameful wickedness, deliberate sin against the light—holding down "the truth in [5] unrighteousness" [5]—there would appear to be no instance in

[1] Matt. xvi. 17, 18.

[2] Mark ix. 42; Luke xxiii. 42, 43; John i. 12; iii. 15, 16, 18, 36; iv. 41, 42; v. 24; vi. 29, 35, 40, 47; vii. 38; viii. 30; ix. 35; x. 42; xi. 25, 26, 42; xii. 36, 44, 46; xiv. 11; xvi. 27; xvii. 20, 21; xx. 28, 31; Acts ii. 41, 44; iv. 4, 32; viii. 12; ix. 42; x. 43; xi. 17, 21; xiii. 12, 39, 48; xiv. 1, 23; xv. 5, 7, 11; xvi. 31, 34; xvii. 34; xviii. 8, 27; xix. 2, 4, 18, 20; xx. 21; xxi. 20, 25; xxii. 19; Rom. i. 16; iii. 22; iv. 5, 11, 17, 18, 24; ix. 33; x. 4, 9, 10, 14, 16; xiii. 11; xv. 13; 1 Cor. i. 21; iii. 5, 11; xiv. 22; xv. 2; 2 Cor. iv. 13; Gal. ii. 16; iii. 6, 22; Eph. i. 13, 15, 19; Phil. i. 29; 1 Thess. i. 7; ii. 10, 13; iv. 14; 2 Thess. i. 10; 1 Tim. i. 16; iii. 16; 2 Tim. i. 12; Tit. iii. 8; Heb. iv. 3; ii. 6; James ii. 26; 1 Peter i. 8, 21; ii. 6, 7; 1 John iii. 23; v. 1, 5, 10, 13.

[3] Matt. xviii. 17; Rev. ii. 2, 14, 15, 20. [4] 1 Cor. v. 1-12; 1 Tim. i. 20.

[5] Rom. i. 18.

the New Testament of any one "holding fast the Head" being "cast out" solely for going astray in his views.

The Greek word *hairetikos*, rendered "heretical," occurs only once in the New Testament;[1] and there, according to the Revised Version, it may equally mean "factious". [1]

The root word *hairesis* occurs nine times. In three of these instances it is translated "heresies," with the respective alternative renderings of "factions,"[2] "parties,"[3] "sects".[4] In the remaining six instances it is rendered "sect"; four of these referring to Christians[5] and the third of the four being alternatively rendered "heresy". The underlying idea, therefore, would seem to be sect, party or faction whatever its ground or *raison d'être*. [2] [3] [4] [5]

At first sight the following passage appears to point to heresy and the ostracism of heretics: "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into *your* house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works";[6] but a moment's reflection shows that what is condemned is the throwing off of the restraints of Christian teaching by "evil works". Indeed the same apostle strongly censured ruthless and arbitrary casting "out of the Ecclesia".[7] [6] [7]

May we not gather something of Christ's totally different attitudes to wickedness and false teaching from Rev. ii. 2: "I know thy works, and thy toil and patience, and that thou canst not bear evil men"? Then follow the words: "and didst try them who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and didst find them false; and thou hast patience and didst bear for my name's sake, and hast not grown weary".

[1] Tit. iii. 10. [2] 1 Cor. xi. 19. [3] Gal. v. 20.
[4] 2 Peter ii. 1. [5] Acts xv. 5; xxiv. 5; xxiv. 14; xxviii. 22.
[6] 2 John 9, 10, 11. [7] 3 John 10.

How many martyrs might have been spared had the ecclesiastics in past days been influenced by the spirit and principle of these words!

It should be noted that the messages to the other six Ecclesias also severely condemn wickedness and immoral, but not simply erroneous, teaching. Paul's use of the word *anathema*—accursed—would seem to indicate God's curse, not
[1] man's punishment.[1] Otherwise, how many Church members would have to be excommunicated if action based on *human* judgment were taken upon 1 Cor. xvi. 22! It is to be feared that, in almost every evangelical Church, some members are to be found with unscriptural views on very important points, as a rule arrived at sincerely in the absence of Bible knowledge and of sound teaching, and who could nevertheless honestly subscribe to the vital truth contained in the proposed declaration. To attempt to "cast out" such, however, from the Churches—a function also, as the parable of the Sower clearly shows us, entirely beyond our
[2] powers[2]—would simply be to further subdivide and increase their number.

Meantime, since no true earthly father—how much less our Father in heaven—would expel from home a beloved son if *in ignorance* he had been led by false teachers to embrace erroneous and dangerous doctrines, should not we also have "patience" and "bear" with the erring one till, like Priscilla and Aquila with Apollos, we have "expounded unto him the way of God more carefully," and, by His bless-
[3] ing on our efforts, have achieved a like admirable result?[3]

Further, there is every reason to believe that a federal union in each town of Christians, as such, would lift all of them to a higher standard both of life and teaching; and that the Christian public opinion thereby formed, would of itself blight and destroy many unsatisfactory developments.

[1] Gal. i. 8, 9. [2] Matt. xiii. 28, 29, 30.
[3] Acts xviii. 24-28; see also James v. 19, 20.

Errors now springing up in many minds *brooding in isolation*, through "forsaking the assembling of ourselves together,"[1] would thus be dissipated by the greatly increased "fellowship one with another," and interchange of Scripture knowledge which would result. [1]

Magna est veritas et prevalebit. All that the truth of God requires is to be heard. The federation in every place of those who—"holding fast the Head, from whom all the body, being supplied and knit together through the joints and bands, increaseth with the increase of God"[2]—yearn to unite for mutual edification and "comfort of the Holy Ghost"[3] cannot but conduce to the spread of the light. [2] [3]

And thus the Christians of each city, drawn together by "the Spirit," who is "the truth,"[4] would thereby be guided "into all the truth"[5] and bring forth "the fruit of the light," "in all goodness and righteousness and truth,"[6] to the praise and honour of their glorious Head and King. [4] [5] [6]

Further, the creeds and formularies of men, however carefully and conscientiously prepared, are at best imperfect and disproportionate expressions of the truth; in the course of time they are all found to err by excess or defect. Some of them, lifted in past days to even higher authority than the Word of God (!), have provoked intensely bitter controversies, and even desolating wars, besides unfitting myriads of men for an unbiassed study of the Scriptures under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

In our own day it is notorious that, whilst in almost all denominations a direct or implied subscription to a creed is a condition of membership, there are in each denomination many members in full standing who could not truthfully affirm that all parts of the declaration justly represent their views. But the fact is winked at on both sides, each tacitly consenting to "let sleeping dogs lie".

[1] Heb. x. 25. See p. 177. [2] Col. ii. 19. [3] Acts ix. 31.
[4] 1 John v. 7. [5] John xvi. 13. [6] Eph. v. 9.

As all doctrinal statements are simply human and fallible conceptions of the truth, should they not be relegated to their true place as helps or definitions, to be received in each age for exactly what they are worth, in presence of the Word illumined by the Spirit?

Christ, assuredly, did not intend the liberty of His people to be bound for generations by "the dead hand" or "judged [1] by another conscience,"[1] but, on the contrary, that we should all "stand fast" in the "freedom" with which He "set us [2] free".[2]

As members of His body, we have the glorious assurance of our Head: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end [3] of the world,"[3] and also His explicit promise, not only that our Heavenly Father "shall give the Holy Spirit to them [4] that ask Him,"[4] but that He, "the Spirit of truth," "shall [5] guide" us "into all the truth".[5]

Any Christian community therefore which, deeply conscious of its fallibility, jealously maintains its right at all times, *under the Spirit's guidance*, to revise and re-define its creeds and standards, may be said to have taken its future out of "the hand of man" to place it in "the hand of the Lord". It is true that those local Churches which are entirely self-governing and unfederated with any of the other Churches of their denomination (*e.g.*, those of Congregationalists and Baptists), would incur a measure of risk in reserving to themselves unrestricted liberty in the matter of creeds. A congregation might, for example, be seduced into rationalism or ritualism by the magnetic eloquence of a minister who had dragged his anchor and drifted into serious error. But there would be very small chance of dangerous developments in the case of a community composed, like the Ecclesia, of the membership of all the Christian denominations and congregations of a city, or of a rural district consisting of many

[1] 1 Cor. x. 29. [2] Gal. v. 1; Rom. viii. 21. [3] Matt. xxviii. 20.
[4] Luke xi. 13. [5] John xvi. 13.

villages. In the multitude of counsellors there would be safety.[1] [1]

From the foregoing considerations it further seems to clearly follow that power is rightly taken by the Ecclesia to alter, from time to time as fresh light may break forth from "the Spirit of truth," any or all of its by-laws, including those defining its fundamental object, the conditions of membership in it, and every other feature of its constitution.

The requirement from members that they shall be "faithful and true" to Christ whenever sectarian, partisan or other claims upon them conflict with loyalty to Him seems fully justified by apostolic precedent. The members of those early Christian Ecclesias, which consisted partly of Jewish and partly of Gentile converts, were specially enjoined to "abstain from the pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from what is strangled and from blood".[2] Without the two first [2] stipulations morality would have been destroyed, and without the two last the habits and practices of Gentile Christians would have so wounded the feelings of their Jewish brethren that many Ecclesias would have been rent in twain.

In England and various other lands the sectarian and partisan spirit is such a terrible evil, that it has for centuries segregated evangelical Christians in two wholly estranged camps without mutual relations, thereby unspeakably crippling their spiritual, social and political power for good.[3] [3]

If then "the body" of Christ, "the Head," to whom "all authority hath been given" "in heaven and on earth," is to be no longer "divided"[4] and paralysed by the separation of [4] its limbs and organs, it seems imperative that all Christians

[1] Prov. xi. 14. There seems no good reason (assuredly, there is no Scriptural one) why Congregationalists and Baptists should not make good this weak spot in their armour. This was in fact urged years ago by some leading Congregationalists. It would obviously give them, as *tribes*, the *unit* of organisation of the Ecclesia itself, *viz.*, the city. (See p. 23 *seq.*)

[2] Acts xv. 20; xvi. 4.

[3] In Gal. ii. 11, 12 we see separatism very strongly reprobated; see also Jude 19.

[4] 1 Cor. i. 13.

should agree to be loyal to the spirit of His solemn declaration: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me,"[1] by recognising His claims as supreme and paramount to those of sect and party, and by *conferring and acting together as brethren* in religious, social and political matters.

OBJECT.

The establishment, in ....., of "the Ecclesia of God" to accomplish the work committed to it, as "the body of Christ," by its divine and glorious Head, and, primarily, to fulfil His prayer on the eve of Gethsemane and Calvary that His members may be "one":—

> "These things spake Jesus; and lifting up his eyes to heaven, he said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that the Son may glorify thee: even as thou gavest him authority over all flesh, that whatsoever thou hast given him, to them he should give eternal life. And this is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, *even* Jesus Christ. I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I manifested thy name unto the men whom thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them to me; and they have kept thy word. Now they know that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are from thee: for the words which thou gavest me I have given unto them; and they received *them*, and knew of a truth that I came forth from thee, and they believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me; for they are thine: and all things that are mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And I am no more in the world,

[1] Matt. x. 37.

and these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep them in thy name which thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we *are*. While I was with them, I kept them in thy name which thou hast given me; and I guarded them, and not one of them perished, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word; and the world hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them from the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil *one*. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth. As thou didst send me into the world, even so sent I them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth. Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me. And the glory which thou hast given me I have given unto them; that they may be one, even as we *are* one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me. Father, that which thou hast given me, I will that, where I am, they also may be with me; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world knew thee not, but I knew thee; and these knew that thou didst send me; and I made known unto them thy name, and will make it known; that the love wherewith thou lovedst me may be in them, and I in them."[1] 1

Membership.

The Ecclesia consists of all the members of "the body of Christ" in..... who, under their divine Head, are drawn

[1] John xvii.

together by the Holy Spirit in their filial attitude to God and fraternal attitude to each other.

.....means the area or island of population bounded as shown on the accompanying map.

Membership Declaration

Every applicant for membership of the Ecclesia is to be furnished by the Elections Committee with a printed copy—(*a*) of the by-laws of the Ecclesia, and (*b*) of the following form of declaration. For these he is to sign a form of receipt.

Declaration to be signed by the applicant for membership.

To the Ecclesia in.....

I apply to be admitted to membership;

I SOLEMNLY DECLARE THAT I HAVE PUT MY TRUST IN CHRIST "MY LORD AND MY GOD" AS THE ALL-SUFFICIENT AND ONLY SAVIOUR FROM THE GUILT AND POWER OF SIN;

I agree that if admitted a member I will throughout my membership loyally conform to the Ecclesia by-laws for the time being.

Date on which the Form of Declaration was						Applicant's Signature. (Name in full.)	Applicant's Residence. (Full postal address.)
Received from Elections Committee.			Returned to Elections Committee.				
Day of Mo.	Month.	Year.	Day of Mo.	Month.	Year.		

Subjoined declaration to be signed by two or by three members of the Ecclesia.

To the Ecclesia in.....

I know the signer of the foregoing declaration, and I hereby recommend h... for membership of the Ecclesia.

Signature. (Name in full.)	Residence. (Full postal address.)
.....	.....,...
.....	.....
.....	.....

In order that the applicant for membership may have ample time to acquaint himself with the by-laws, before signing the form of declaration handed to him along with a copy of the latter, the form of declaration is to be retained by him for seven days before he returns it to the Elections Committee.

Admission to Membership.

The names and addresses of all formally recommended applicants for membership are to be published by the Elections Committee in the next issue of the *Ecclesia Journal*. If, within one month of publication, no written objection to the admission of an applicant be received by the Elections Committee, then the applicant is *ipso facto* admitted, and, three months after the date of his application, his name as a member is to be published in the *Ecclesia Journal*, and a card of membership is to be handed to him. No earlier intimation of the result is to be given, in order that attention may not be drawn to opposed applications which may be *sub judice* during the three months following the date of application.

If a written notice of objection to the admission of an

applicant be received by the Elections Committee, such objection being on the ground of shameful wickedness, it is to lay the case before the Conciliation and Arbitration Committee for decision.

As it is a very serious matter either to reject a worthy applicant for membership, or to admit an applicant whose conduct would tend to corrupt or disgrace the Ecclesia, all reasonable and practically available precautions are to be taken by the Conciliation and Arbitration Committee to sift out the real facts of opposed applications.

The inquiry is to be made in private in the presence both of the applicant and of the objectors.

There is to be "no case" against an applicant if the objection is not supported by the testimony of either two or three [1] witnesses.[1]

Should an applicant be objected to on the ground of shameful wickedness in past days, there is to be "no case" against him if the Conciliation and Arbitration Committee is satisfied from the evidence of his subsequent life that he has sincerely repented of it.

If, after the hearing by the Conciliation and Arbitration Committee, the voting for and against the application by the members of the committee present be equal, the applicant is to have the benefit of the doubt, and there is to be "no case" against him. Should a clear majority of the members

[1] One true witness may make a mistake. So may a second and a third, but, by the law of probability, they will not make *the same* mistake; thus they are a check upon each other.

The following seven passages refer to the requirement—under both the law and the gospel—of two or more witnesses: Num. xxxv. 30; Deut. xvii. 6; xix. 15; Matt. xviii. 16; John viii. 17; 1 Tim. v. 19; Heb. x. 28.

Christ directs an aggrieved Christian, first of all, to go to the aggriever alone, and then, if the latter will not hear him, to take with him "one or two more, that at the mouth of two witnesses or three every word may be established". By such procedure obviously the one or two witnesses become two or three for the side which is proved to be in the right, the person who is in the wrong being thus left alone.

of the committee present vote against the application, the applicant is to be rejected ; but the committee, before coming to a final adverse conclusion, is to consider the matter a second time, not less than a month afterwards, in order that it may not make an impulsive decision. At such second consideration the committee may again, should it deem it desirable, ask the applicant and the objectors to be present.

As the second consideration of the case may result in the reversal of the first conclusion ; as it would therefore be unjust to the applicant, meantime, to allow any rumour of a first unfavourable decision to transpire ; as the publication of such first adverse conclusion might excite comments which might tend to improperly influence the committee at the second hearing ; and as such announcement might tempt the committee, for mere consistency's sake, to adhere to its first finding, every member of the committee is to be bound in honour to keep all first conclusions absolutely secret.

Members of other Ecclesias presenting credentials therefrom to the Elections Committee are to be admitted forthwith to all the rights and privileges of the Ecclesia except that of voting. After three months' residence within the Ecclesia area they are to be entitled to a complete transfer of membership and to the right to vote.

Minors may be admitted to membership of the Ecclesia but without power to vote at Ecclesia meetings. They may be present at all meetings which are not for special reasons restricted to adults.

As conclusive evidence of the equal status of all adult members, every member (without being limited as regards other subscriptions, annual or otherwise) is to pay an annual membership subscription, of one shilling only, to the funds of the Ecclesia.[1] 1

An alphabetical list of the names and addresses of all members of the Ecclesia, as well as of all members of com-

[1] Exod. xxx. 15.

mittees, and of officers, is to be issued annually by the Elections Committee. All members are to receive new cards of membership annually.

Standing of Members.

If a written charge against a member, of shameful wickedness, be forwarded to the Elections Committee, the accused and the witnesses against him are to meet before the Conciliation and Arbitration Committee, which is then to follow the lines of procedure (as far as they are applicable) prescribed for opposed applications for membership.

If the charge, after the second consideration of the case, be finally proved and established, then the Conciliation and Arbitration Committee is to order the name of the member to be struck off the roll of the Ecclesia, and the Elections Committee is to strike it off forthwith.

Members who have been struck off the roll of the Ecclesia for shameful wickedness are to be restored by the Conciliation and Arbitration Committee to all the rights and privileges of membership on obtaining evidence, which it deems satisfactory, of their repentance and change of life.

If, however, the evidence submitted with such new application for membership is not considered satisfactory by the committee, it is not forthwith to announce its conclusion, but —as in the case of opposed original applications and of charges against existing members—it is to consider the case a second time, a month afterwards, and in due course to give its decision.

The Conciliation and Arbitration Committee, being a neutral body elected jointly by all the denominations in the Ecclesia to justly, impartially, and in conformity with rules drawn up by it, arbitrate and adjudicate in all cases:—

(*a*) of opposed application for membership;

(*b*) of accusation or charge against members;

(*c*) of continued dispute or difference between members;

(*d*) of dispute or difference to which the Ecclesia or any member or members of it are parties, the remaining party or parties to it being non-members who have in writing requested, and agreed to abide by, the committee's finding and decision;

it is hereby expressly agreed by every applicant for membership and every member that every finding, decision and award of the Conciliation and Arbitration Committee shall be final and conclusive upon and shall bind all parties thereto (whether members, committees or others, as the case may be), and on the application of any of the parties may be made a rule of court.

General Rights, Powers and Duties of Members.

There is to be no "respect of persons" whatever as between the adult members of the Ecclesia, the only rank recognised being that due to Christlike character and service.

The whole authority of the Ecclesia as a federation resides in its members: all the functions and powers devolving upon the various committees and officers at the quadrennial elections and appointments being conferred on them by the members, for the purposes of the Ecclesia, and for four years only.

The entire property of the Ecclesia as a federation belongs to its members; being vested by them, at the quadrennial elections, in the Trust Committee, for the purposes of the Ecclesia and for four years only.

In every department of life every member of the Ecclesia, impelled by unswerving love and loyalty to his divine Head and King, is to carry out the entire principle embodied in His words: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me"; and whenever sectarian, political or any other demands upon him conflict with Christ's supreme claims, he is to be "faithful and true" to Him and the truths and principles of His Word.

ADMINISTRATION.

No person can be elected or appointed to any committee or other office within the community of the Ecclesia who is not a member of the Ecclesia.

Continuous moral, mental or physical unfitness or incapacitation for duty, or continuous indifference to the ruin of personal reputation and, therefore, to that of the Ecclesia, disqualifies for taking or retaining office in it. The decision of the Conciliation and Arbitration Committee, after following the lines of procedure (as far as they are applicable) detailed under the "standing of members" (p. 256), is to be final in any such case.

COMMITTEES AND THEIR OFFICERS.

General Functions, Duties, Powers and Mutual Relations of the Committees and Qualifications of their Members and Officers.

The federal, *i.e.*, the non-denominational, work of the Ecclesia is to be conducted in departments, each department being administered by an elective committee. The committees are to be elected directly to their specific departments by the whole membership of the Ecclesia, quadrennially, and on the principle of proportional representation. The following committees are to be exempted, to the following extent, from the operation of this by-law: The Conciliation and Arbitration Committee and the Home Evangelisation Committee. These committees are to be elected by the members of the denominations *as such*, every denomination having one representative upon each.

In addition to the departmental committees, there are to be two composite bodies with limited powers—the Joint Board with certain *executive* and the Referendum Council with certain *advisory* functions.

In order to give the various departmental committees equal representation on the Joint Board and the Referendum

Council, they are each to be composed of the same number of members, *i.e.*, seven. The undermentioned committees are to be exempt from the operation of this by-law: The Conciliation and Arbitration Committee and the Home Evangelisation Committee. These committees, being composed of denominational representatives, are to have as many members as there are denominations to be represented. The Joint Board and the Referendum Council, being large bodies, are each to have an executive.

Every committee is to elect annually by majority vote its chairman, treasurer, secretary, and any other officers, honorary or stipendiary, who may be required to carry on its special work.

All members of committees and office-bearers who are not incapacitated are to retain their posts till the appointment of their successors.

For election to membership of committee no qualifications other than those "of good report, full of the Spirit, and of wisdom" for their particular administration are to rule or influence the electorate.

Chairmen of committees are to be God-fearing men, of thorough business capacity, great power for work and control of detail, full of faith and hope in the causes entrusted to their respective departments, straightforward, charitable in judgment, affable, not easily ruffled, and ready in resource.

Secretaries and others acting under the committees are to be honourable, truthful persons, of trained business habits, actuated by high and conscientious motives; and who, having been practically tried, have been found faithful to trust and blameless in the discharge of duty. A secretary or other officer chosen by a committee from outside its own body is not to have the powers of a member of the committee.

Committees whose work requires only a portion of the time of a stipendiary officer may arrange with one another for the joint employment of the same person.

Every committee is to have complete control over its own department of administration—subject only to the paramount authority of the Ecclesia and its by-laws—and is to be empowered to use the common seal of the Ecclesia.

The common seal is to be provided by and kept in the custody of the Joint Board.

Any official acts or resolutions of any committee, upon any matter or question with which its members were not elected to deal, are *ultra vires* and destitute of authority and validity.

Any committee may alter or abolish any by-law or make any new by-law affecting matters within its department, but no proposed alteration or abolition of a by-law or creation of a new by-law is to take effect (*a*) until the written notification of the same has been considered by the Conciliation and Arbitration Committee and approved by it as constitutional and clearly defined, and (*b*) until three months after the publication of such approved notification in the *Ecclesia Journal*.

The proceedings of all meetings of committees are to be recorded in writing. The correctness, or otherwise, of such records or minutes, as read to the next meeting, is to be decided by the vote of the latter. If the minutes are pronounced to be correct, they are then to be signed by the chairman.

Special meetings of committees may be convened on the requisition of any two or more of their members.

Four members of a committee are to constitute a quorum.

All committee decisions are to be either the unanimous or majority decisions of a vote; but all tie votes (except those of the Conciliation and Arbitration Committee, in cases of objection to applications for membership or of accusation against existing members, and for which special provision is made in the by-laws) are to be referred in prayer to the lot.

In dealing with perplexed questions and problems involving moral principle, the committees are in all cases to avoid the methods of opportunism and to endeavour to ascertain God's

point of view by investigating the divine laws and principles which bear upon the matter under consideration.

Should the work of any committee tend to overlap that of another, the committees concerned are to confer and jointly delimit their respective spheres or fields of effort; should they fail to arrive at an understanding the question is to be referred by them, for definitive settlement, to the Conciliation and Arbitration Committee.

Every committee is to have power to co-operate, upon equal terms and for a common end, with any of the other committees of the Ecclesia, with any committees of other Ecclesias, and with any other bodies who are in sympathy with its objects.

Within the limits of their respective spheres the Joint Board and the Referendum Council may co-operate for common ends with the like bodies of other Ecclesias or with other bodies. Co-operation, whether promoted by the committees or by the Joint Board or Referendum Council, is, in the case of spiritual work, to be with Christians and, in the case of other work, with any suitable persons.

Every departmental body in the Ecclesia is to conduct its work not only efficiently but also economically; it is to steadfastly set its face against lavish expenditure. As the Finance Committee is responsible for providing the income necessary for the work of the several departments, each of the latter is to carefully forecast, and give the committee the longest practicable notice of, its money requirements. Each department is to confer with the Finance Committee either (*a*) when it proposes to incur seriously increased expenditure, or (*b*) when the Finance Committee expresses a desire for conference with it; and it is, in deciding its course, to have due regard to the financial position of the Ecclesia as shown by the Finance Committee.

All the departments are to aim to achieve a reputation for statesmanlike finance, and to shun a wasteful extravagance

which could end only in the melancholy and humiliating remedy of investing the Finance Committee with a veto power over their expenditure.[1]

The committees are, to the best of their power, to encourage and strengthen all organisations which have a Christian or philanthropic object, which are on a thoroughly sound and wise basis, and which desire, and have a reasonable claim on, their help.

The various committees are, in their respective spheres, to do all in their power to promote, not only the union of the Christians of their city, but fraternal relations with all other Christians, in fulfilment of the prayer of their Head and King—"That they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me".

To the utmost of their influence and the limit of their powers the committees are to second and support the great and glorious work of the evangelical denominations for the conversion of sinners and the building up of believers. Moved by an intense desire to maximise the power for good of all the Churches which are "holding fast the Head," they are to use the most judicious means to bring about brotherly co-ordination of effort between them. In all things they are to endeavour to associate and consolidate the Christian forces of righteousness in the community, against the serried ranks of evil, and, as far as in them lies, to strengthen the hands of the promoters of every good work, and every just and wise reform.

The committees are to earnestly exert themselves to induce all Christians, in the national and local voting constituencies, to act together as a unit, and thus, by their numbers and influence with the electorate, to largely outvote, and thus end the domination of, the liquor interest and other self-seeking sections whose support has hitherto demoralised so many

[1] See p. 287.

public representatives. They are also to encourage men of high principle and aim, in the municipality and the State, to come forward as candidates, to promote the most advanced Christian policy and legislation.

The committees are, by the holding of meetings and conferences, the promotion of lectures and addresses, and the reading of papers followed by discussion, and by any other wise and effective means, to do all in their power to secure the hearty practical sympathy and co-operation of the members of the Ecclesia in the work of their respective departments.

Every committee which finds it necessary or desirable to interest the general public in its objects is to judiciously advocate them either by letters or articles in the press; by public meetings, conferences, lectures or addresses; by memorials and representations to public bodies and others; or in any other efficient and legitimate way.

With this aim, and in order also to dissipate any false views and misrepresentations which may arise of matters within its sphere, each committee is to bring forward able men, qualified to do justice to its cause, to speak or write on its behalf.

It is assumed to be of prime importance :—

(1) That all reasonable facilities and opportunities for addressing meetings be afforded by the committees to members of the Ecclesia who desire to express their convictions upon current questions.

(2) That the committees should thereby, from time to time, be enabled to ascertain the views of the membership upon such questions.

(3) That, at critical junctures, the committees should have their hands strengthened by outward manifestations of the feeling of the Ecclesia.

Accordingly ;—

(*a*) The committees are to be empowered to convene resolution and non-resolution meetings on their own initiative.

(*b*) Every committee, which is requested in writing to convene a meeting to consider or discuss and pass a resolution upon some subject or question within its province—the requisition being signed by not less than 10 per cent. of the members of the Ecclesia—is to duly convene such meeting.

Resolutions may not be passed at meetings unless the notices convening the latter intimate that motions are to be submitted.

Special commissions of inquiry, or committees for temporary work, may be decided on by resolution at meetings; but they are to be elected at the meetings by the method of proportional representation, and for a period not in any case extending beyond the end of the current quadrennial electoral term.

A written request, signed by not less than twenty-five members of the Ecclesia, asking any person or persons to address, deliver a lecture, or read a paper at a non-resolution meeting or conference—such request being endorsed by such persons' signatures of consent—is to be regarded by the committee to which it is presented, and whose department covers the subject of the proposed address, etc., as a requisition for a meeting.

The several committees are open-mindedly to receive deputations desiring to make representations to them; and, carefully and unprejudicedly, to consider memorials, statements and suggestions which may be laid before them.

In order that there may be free and facile personal communication between the two parties, in the case of written requisitions, memorials and other representations to committees, the seventh signatory is to be regarded by the committee concerned as the honorary-secretary of the requisitionists, and he and the first six as their representatives.

The committees are to obtain and supply to members interested in matters or questions within their respective spheres all reasonable returns of facts, figures, and other information

which such members may request; and also to generally assist them in their special objects in any other desirable way.

In their whole work and policy the members of the committees are to manifest their love to God and fellowship of the Spirit by a Christlike attitude towards each other, and towards all with whom they have communications. Non-christians helped by them in trouble and need, and led by such "good works" to "glorify God in the day of visitation," are to be earnestly and lovingly drawn to the far higher gift of pardon and eternal life through faith in Christ.

Equal claims between members as to precedence, or position otherwise, which ought not to be decided in the spirit of the injunction "in honour preferring one another," are to be referred to the arbitrament of the lot in prayer.

Every committee is to submit an annual report of its proceedings and audited financial statement (including a financial forecast) to the whole Ecclesia, the document having been previously signed by all its members.

It is to place the same in the hands of the Elections Committee within twelve working days after the close of the year.

All the foregoing regulations for the ordinary elective committees, which can fairly and reasonably be construed to apply also to the Conciliation and Arbitration Committee, the Home Evangelisation Committee, the Joint Board and the Referendum Council, are to be understood to apply to them and to the executives of the two latter bodies.

As the creation of any central authority over the heads of the departmental committees would involve a direct interference with the administration of these self-governing bodies, and thus inevitably result in undermining their sense of responsibility and consequent power for good, all tendencies towards the formation of such an authority are to be vigilantly repressed. Therefore:—

(*a*) The Joint Board (an executive body) and the Refer-

endum Council (a purely advisory body) are not to be allowed to amalgamate or to merge their functions in any way, but each is to keep its province entirely distinct from and independent of that of the other.

(*b*) Neither the Joint Board nor the Referendum Council is to be permitted to increase its powers.

(*c*) No officer of the Joint Board is to be an officer of the Referendum Council.

It is a fundamental principle of the Ecclesia that neither its Conciliation and Arbitration Committee, nor its Home Evangelisation Committee, nor any other of its committees, nor its Joint Board, nor its Referendum Council, nor any department of its administration, nor any of its officers or members as such, nor the organisation itself as a whole, is to interfere, in any way whatever, with the internal administration, affairs or arrangements of any religious denomination. This regulation is, however, in no way to restrict the right of any member of the Ecclesia, in a Christian spirit, to discuss any subject or question bearing on the promotion of the complete religious liberty and equality before the law and public functionaries, of all persons and denominations, or to advocate or promote any political or other measure tending to establish or confirm these just and necessary principles.

1 CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION COMMITTEE.[1]

As, in a federated community, all personal disputes should be adjudicated by a body representing all its several sections, each of the denominations in the Ecclesia is to elect a member of the Conciliation and Arbitration Committee. The qualifications for membership of this committee are to be of

[1] "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God" (Matt. v. 9).

"Dare any of you, having a matter against his neighbour, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?" (1 Cor. vi. 1).

"Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more, things that pertain to this life?" (*ibid.*, 6; see whole context).

the highest order. So far as humanly possible men only of the most mature judgment, widest experience and proved Christian character should be elected by the Ecclesia. This committee of denominational representatives is to be the ultimate court of appeal under Christ's rule,[1] and after His [1] first and second injunctions have been carried out, for all disputants who are members of the Ecclesia.

The committee is to do its utmost to educate the members of the Ecclesia into a resolve to loyally, courageously, and above all in Christ's spirit, adopt His prescribed course of procedure immediately a dispute, quarrel or threatened estrangement arises through any cause, with a view to end it at once.

The Conciliation and Arbitration Committee is to investigate and adjudicate upon all cases laid before it—

(*a*) Of objections to candidates for membership.

(*b*) Of charges against existing members.

The committee is to have charge of the official copy of the by-laws of the Ecclesia. It is—in conjunction with the committee concerned in each case—to revise all proposed new by-laws and changes in existing by-laws previous to the notification of the proposals in the *Ecclesia Journal*, in order to ensure their clearness and constitutionality. It is to decide all questions and disputes as to the interpretation and construction of the by-laws; and all members and committees of the Ecclesia are to loyally and unreservedly accept its decisions. In such decisions the committee is to be guided by the manifest intention of the by-laws if their spirit should conflict with their letter.

Should any member or members, or committee or other body of members, in any case decided by the Conciliation and Arbitration Committee, appeal against its decision to any outside tribunal, such decision is to be a rule of court of such tribunal.

[1] Matt. xviii. 15-19.

1 Should either person,[1] in any case decided by the committee, reject its ruling, and deliberately and persistently disobey it, then such person is to be regarded and treated by the Ecclesia as not of it. If, at the end of three months, a member adjudged by the committee to be in the wrong should maintain that he is not in fault, the committee is to reconsider his case, and if it should then reaffirm its finding, it is to notify him that another week's non-compliance by him with its decision will terminate his membership of the Ecclesia. Should he not, at the end of such week, have complied with the requirement of the committee, the Elections Committee is forthwith to remove his name from the members' roll.

Should any member, against whom a charge is made, be an office-bearer in the Ecclesia, and the committee, after the prescribed hearing, should decide that his offence is of such a nature that some penalty short of the cancellation of his membership—such as the withdrawal from him of office—would reasonably meet the requirements of the case, then the Elections Committee is to duly carry such decision into effect.

The Conciliation and Arbitration Committee may act as arbitrator or peacemaker between any member or members of the Ecclesia and any non-member or non-members, if the latter should request its services and sign an agreement that if any appeal be made against its decision to any other tribunal such decision shall be a rule of court of such tribunal.

It may act as arbitrator or as peacemaker between any two or more disputants or bodies of disputants (*e.g.*, employers and employed)—not members of the Ecclesia—who may request its services; both parties to the dispute signing an agreement that if any appeal be made against its decision to any other tribunal such decision shall be a rule of court of such tribunal.

It may make any suggestions or recommendations which it

[1] The word "person" is also to mean each individual of a body of disputant persons.

may consider desirable and practicable for the equitable and pacific settlement of social, industrial, commercial and other questions and disputes.

Associated with the Conciliation and Arbitration Committees of other Ecclesias, it is to neglect no wise and legitimate opportunity of promoting a feeling of brotherhood, both between the Christians of all lands, and between their respective peoples, every rational means—including the bringing about (*a*) of interchanges of visits between representative sections of their populations and (*b*) of representative world-gatherings and federations meeting successively in the different countries —being availed of to further that beneficent end.

It is to strenuously advocate the concurrent and progressive reduction by each nation of the present provocative and ruinously costly naval and military armaments and their replacement by a permanently sitting International Conciliation and Arbitration Board composed of eminent and highly paid jurists representing the various States.

It is to persistently urge the conciliatory and definitive settlement, on principles of justice and equity, of all outstanding questions between the nations before they become dangerously irritating on either side.

It is to encourage, in the education of the young, the formation of the conviction that moral courage is a far nobler and rarer quality than the physical courage which is perhaps the cheapest of all the virtues; that it is Christ's own principle, whilst manifesting complete fearlessness, to forgive injuries and endure taunts of cowardice rather than fight for one's own rights; and that when resort to force is made to redress a people's wrongs, it should be by deliberate magisterial action, prompted by the highest and purest motives, and then only after all peaceable means to obtain justice have failed.

The Conciliation and Arbitration Committee being a judicial body, its members are not to be elected or appointed to any executive committee or post, nor to the Joint Board; but

they are to give their counsel as to the constitutionality of the procedure of these bodies when any of them may desire it.

The Conciliation and Arbitration Committee is to be subject to the regulations governing all the other Ecclesia committees—except where such regulations are manifestly inapplicable to it.

1 HOME EVANGELISATION COMMITTEE.[1]

This committee is to be composed of representatives of the denominations, one from each.

It is to do its utmost to promote brotherly co-operation between the various preachers of "the Word" throughout the Ecclesia sphere, and the wisest and most effective co-ordination of their work, with a view to the evangelisation of the whole population.

In order to assist persons wishful to arrange for series of special evangelistic meetings, the committee is to keep a carefully posted register of approved evangelists containing reliable information as to the gifts and capabilities of each.

As the members of the Home Evangelisation Committee are the denominational representatives of the Ecclesia's greatest, most important and most fruitful home work, they are *ex officio*, in conjunction with the chairmen of the other departmental committees, to form the executive of the Joint Board and the executive of the Referendum Council.

2 FOREIGN MISSIONS COMMITTEE.[2]

In view of the vastness of the field "white unto harvest" —much of it still destitute of labourers and far beyond the

[1] "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel" (1 Cor. ix. 16).

"Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things" (Gal. vi. 6).

[2] "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. xxviii. 18, 19, 20).

powers of the existing missionary societies—the Foreign Missions Committee is in every practicable way to assist and further their work; it is also, wherever it may deem it necessary, to energetically promote new interdenominational enterprises in unoccupied regions.

It is to labour to create such a Christian public opinion as will bring home to every follower of the Master his responsibility to Him for the moral and material support of foreign missionary work.

Education Committee.[1]

Realising the immeasurable importance of the right development of the powers and faculties with which a beneficent Creator has endowed the young, and the vast possibilities for good or evil to each generation which hinge upon its training during the plastic stage, this committee—as one of its leading functions—is to devote itself to the vigilant consideration from the Christian point of view of the various educational institutions and arrangements of the community.

Whilst keeping in view the necessity for such intelligent and judicious training—by teachers of high moral character—of the mental and physical powers and faculties, as will fit all for the practical work of life, and each individually for the fullest exercise of his special gifts, it is to use all its influence to secure, along with these, the careful culture and enlightenment of the mind and conscience by the study of the character of God as revealed both in nature[2] and Scripture, the winning

[1] "The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein" (Ps. cxi. 2).

"From a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Every scripture inspired of God *is* also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work" (2 Tim. iii. 15, 16).

[2] See Gen. i., ii.; Job xxviii. and xxxvi.-xli.; Psalms viii., xix., lxv., xciii., civ., cxliii. 5; Matt. vi. 25-34; Luke xii. 4-9; Acts xiv. 14-18; xvii. 22-31; Rom. i. 20; 1 Cor. xi. 14; Gal. iv. 8.

of the young heart and will to abstinence from injurious habits, and, in early life, that birth from above which will give the future man a divine helm and motive power.

It is to devote its best powers and energies to bring about joint action by the evangelical denominations for the definitive settlement, on rational Christian lines, of what has been well termed the "irreligious difficulty" in connection with national education; thus at once removing a stigma upon the Christianity of our age, and a barrier to educational progress which is threatening the industrial future of the nation.

Impressed with a sense of the infinite value of the Word of God (*a*) as a perfect revelation of His character, conveying to lost sinners the Father's offer of forgiveness and cleansing through the atoning death of His only begotten Son, and of the Holy Spirit to enable them by Christlike lives to glorify His name; (*b*) as containing the perfect moral law and forming an unfailing handbook of "spiritual wisdom and understanding" for building up Christians on their "most holy faith," and guarding them from the vices and false doctrines of their age; (*c*) as the medium of physical, social and spiritual blessing to all who come within its transforming influences, and at the same time producing for the community and the State the best, most industrious, law-abiding, intelligent and progressive citizens, the Education Committee is to stimulate, in all directions, the acquisition of an intimate practical knowledge of the facts, truths and principles of Scripture as they bear upon daily life.

Deeply convinced of the necessity of raising the standard of the teaching of the Bible and Bible truths and principles, now generally given by the denominations to the young, the committee is to do all in its power (*a*) to encourage and strengthen the hands of the existing organisations of the denominations which have this end in view; (*b*) to secure for every child in the community the full benefit of such improved teaching; (*c*) to promote united arrangements by the

denominations for testing Bible knowledge by periodical examinations of scholars of all ages, grades and schools. In order to counteract the tendency among young people to fall away from Sunday school and Church as they approach maturity, the committee may advocate and promote any wise measure to induce young men and women to continue throughout life the systematic study of the Bible and Bible truths and principles in their application to individual life, to home life, to daily social and industrial life and to the government of the city and the nation.

The committee is thus to be empowered, in any way which may seem to it wise and practical, to stimulate, perfect and extend, in all directions, the work of education in its highest and truest sense.

Members' Aid Committee.[1]

This committee is to organise and administer on the wisest and most intelligent lines an interdenominational fund for the relief of members of the Ecclesia who, through age, infirmity or inability otherwise to earn a livelihood, are in actual need;[2] or who, having been overtaken by misfortune, temporarily lack the necessaries of life.

Wherever circumstances do not hopelessly forbid it, it is to stimulate a spirit of manly self-help[3] and an ambition to be able to help others.

The committee is to be guided generally in its policy and action by the principles and considerations set forth in 1 Tim. v. 3-16.

As far as lies in its power, it is to help to procure remunerative employment for those "fatherless and widows" who are able to work.

It may, if deemed desirable, organise an employment bureau

[1] "So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith" (Gal. vi. 10).

[2] Acts vi. 1-6.

[3] 2 Thess. iii. 8-10.

for supplying the requirements of employers who have vacancies and of Christian employés who are in search of work.

Praise Committee.[1]

This committee is to co-ordinate and utilise for the general good, in the blessed sphere of praise, the efforts of those members of the Ecclesia whom God has endowed with the musical gift. It is to be empowered to adopt every wise and right means to compass this desirable result.

In the case of all meetings or gatherings for which its services are requested, the committee is to provide for the assembly being worthily led in glorifying God, and by "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody" with the heart to the Lord.[2]

Realising that the great purpose of praise is to enable Christians to express their gratitude and devotion to "the Father of mercies," to inspire them with faith, hope and love, to lead them to wholly consecrate their energies and powers to Christ, and to impel them to prayer for the Holy Spirit that sinners may be brought to His feet "to the glory and praise of God," the committee is to vigilantly oppose all tendencies to displace the expression of spiritual emotion by mere æsthetical enjoyment and, by purely musical "performances," to eventually banish praise.

Accordingly whenever parts of the praise consist of solo- or choir-singing, during which the audience is silent, the latter are to be supplied with the words, so that every person may be enabled to "sing with the spirit . . . and with the understanding also".[3]

[1] "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God" (Luke ii. 13).

"The whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works which they had seen" (Luke xix. 37).

"And when they had sung a hymn, they went out unto the mount of Olives" (Matt. xxvi. 30).

[2] Eph. v. 19-21; Col. iii. 16; James v. 13. [3] 1 Cor. xiv. 15.

ANTI-DEMORALISATION COMMITTEE.[1] 1

This committee is to advocate in all persons, and especially in the young, abstinence from all injurious, enslaving and corrupting habits and indulgences.

It is to strenuously work for the alteration of all those laws which sanction or permit institutions and practices that corrupt the people, and for the passing of wise and carefully considered laws empowering local as well as national authorities to diminish and abolish them; it is also to vigorously uphold, and vigilantly watch the execution by the local and other authorities of, all existing laws aimed at the repression or restriction of such demoralising institutions and practices.

It is to strive to secure for all classes of the community the full spiritual and physical benefits of cessation from bread-winning work on the Lord's Day.

It is to endeavour to stimulate, amongst Christians as a body, an increasingly Christlike standard of conviction and practice on all moral questions in social, commercial[2] and 2 political life.

As a mouthpiece of the Ecclesia, it is temperately, but firmly and fearlessly, to rebuke all unjust, immoral or corrupt courses on the part of public officers or administrators, or other prominent persons, or sections of the community; and as far as the influence of the Ecclesia extends, it is to endeavour to create a strong public opinion against such action.

Believing that all doubtful moral questions in regard to family life, Church life, social customs, trade practices and

[1] "Beloved, I beseech you as sojourners and pilgrims, to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Peter ii. 11).

"Deliver them out of the hand of the wicked" (Ps. lxxxii. 4).

"Rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil" (Rom. xiii. 3).

[2] It should, for example, point out, especially to young disciples, the sin and folly of the marriage of Christians with worldlings which is so plainly condemned in Scripture and which has resulted so disastrously in many cases, and the danger of similar *commercial marriage* in business partnership where the ties may be fatally close and binding (2 Cor. vi. 14; 1 Kings xxii. 4, 30 *seq.*; 2 Kings iii. 7; viii. 16-18).

political methods are solvable in the light of the eternal laws and principles of Christ's spiritual kingdom revealed in His Word, it is to encourage their investigation in a calm, unprejudiced, truth-seeking and scientific spirit.

It is to make and publish any recommendations, which it may deem desirable, for the prevention of vice and de-
1 moralisation,[1] including suggestions and proposals for needed reforms in legislation, in municipal, county and national administration; and in domestic, social, commercial and political usages.

2 CHARITY ORGANISATION COMMITTEE.[2]

This committee is to devote itself to the salvation, body and soul, of the sick poor, the destitute and the criminal.

It is to endeavour to organise all over the city, where it is still lacking or inadequate, a systematic and concerted visitation of the "fatherless and widows" by Christians in their several neighbourhoods—all cases being divided into classes according to their respective characters and each class being dealt with upon practical lines to be laid down.

Availing itself of the valuable experience of existing philanthropic and charity organisation societies and associations, it is to resolutely labour to bring about the administration of the charitable relief of the community on such a basis as will secure (*a*) the wisest practical treatment of the different classes of cases, and in all cases the application of the greatest possible stimulus to industry and self-help; (*b*) such arrangements for the immediate furnishing of food and shelter to all

[1] It should draw attention to the melancholy fact that very many trade unions still hold their meetings in public-houses; and urge the Churches in every district to put comfortable rooms at their disposal, either rent free, or at the bare cost of lighting and heating.

[2] "If a brother or sister be naked, and in lack of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Go in peace, be ye warmed and filled; and yet ye give them not the things needful to the body; what doth it profit?" (James ii. 15, 16).

"For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, If any will not work, neither let him eat" (2 Thess. iii. 10).

who are in pressing need as will prevent the possibility of any cases either of starvation or of serious want, and also enable persons solicited for alms to direct applicants to district depôts where their cases will be immediately dealt with on their merits.

It is to examine into the actual character and working of the various existing philanthropic institutions and organisations having to do with the sick poor, the destitute and the vicious; and to report thereon from time to time to the Ecclesia, so that its members may to that extent be guided as to their donations.

It may make any suggestions, which it may deem expedient, as to the scope and management of any of such institutions, with a view both to increase the efficiency of those of them which are based on sound principles, and to secure co-ordination of effort on the part of the various philanthropic organisations.

It may aid in reviving or reconstructing hopeful existing institutions if requested to do so by their members; and may advocate the formation of any wisely planned new ones which it may regard as necessary or highly desirable.

It may receive and distribute to deserving causes or charities any moneys entrusted to it.

It may organise a clearing house or other facile system of collecting and handing over subscriptions, by which philanthropic societies will be saved much of the heavy cost of postal and advertised appeals, and the waste of their officers' valuable time, caused by the prevailing neglect of subscribers to remit their contributions till they are called upon or otherwise "dunned" for them.

It is to earnestly urge the consecration of their incomes to the cause of Christ by all Christians, together with their practical adoption of the system of Lord's Day storing for God clearly indicated by the Apostle to the Gentiles in 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.[1]

[1] Mal. iii. 7-12.

Impressed with the conviction (*a*) that the hands least fitted to minister to the hospital sick, the homeless destitute and the gaol criminal are those of such officials as occupy their post purely for its emoluments, and whose one object is to get through their work with the minimum of trouble and discomfort to themselves; (*b*) that the best ministrant is he who not only does his whole official duty but is moved to bear, believe, hope and endure all things that he may win souls for Christ; (*c*) that Christian ministration makes possible the regeneration and transformation of outcasts who are now humanly speaking beyond hope (the community being thus also to that extent relieved from the permanent burden of their maintenance which a purely official and therefore hardening treatment of the improvident, the sensual and the criminal classes involves), the committee is to labour to bring hospitals, workhouses, gaols and other institutions for dealing with the sick, the destitute and the vicious increasingly under Christian influences, principles and methods. It is with this object to stimulate the supplementing of the service of officials by voluntary visitation and ministration of Christians as far as this may be practically admissible in the respective institu-
1 tions.[1]

2 3 PHYSICAL WELL-BEING[2] AND RECREATION[3] COMMITTEE.

This committee is to advocate and promote all measures and reforms tending to further and increase the physical health and well-being of the community; and especially of those classes of it who are least able to initiate or secure them for themselves.

It is to endeavour to bring within the reach of those not now enjoying them the necessary conditions of healthy life

[1] See Appendix C, p. 324.

[2] He (Jesus) "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts x. 38).

[3] "Come ye yourselves apart into a solitary place, and rest awhile" (Mark vi. 31).

—pure air, pure water, pure and nutritious food; bright, comfortable, pleasantly environed and thoroughly sanitary homes; and, for the bread-winner, reasonable hours of work, fair and liberal remuneration, and release from secular toil on the Lord's Day.

As imperative adjuncts to these, it is to urge upon the individual the necessity of cleanly, industrious, thrifty and temperate habits of life, and abstinence from all injurious indulgences.

It is to stimulate in all directions the acquisition of a knowledge of God's physiological laws; and it may promote the organisation, for the less wealthy classes of the community, of any judicious system of medical supervision which, by remunerating the medical man for maintaining health, shall stimulate him strongly to disease prevention and the teaching of practical hygiene.

The members of the committee are to judiciously avail themselves of every opportunity to lead those who "labour and are heavy laden" to Him whose "yoke is easy" and whose "burden is light," and whose transforming grace will make them victors over their circumstances, and impel them in turn to work for the removal of the evils which afflict their neighbours.

The committee may promote the establishment of "settlements," to be conducted on Christian lines, in those districts of the city where they would manifestly be a blessing to the surrounding population.

It may organise a labour exchange and also an employment exchange, in the interests equally of employers and employed.

It is to strive, by moral suasion, to divert the vast aggregate of earnings, now squandered upon indulgences which lower the work power and blight and desolate the home, into reproductive channels; and thus, by absorbing all surplus labour, to increase the rate of labour remuneration and concurrently lessen the police and poor rates, and other public burdens.

It is also to support all wise legislative proposals for conferring upon locally elected authorities the power to remove public temptations to vice and improvidence from their midst.

The committee may assist, by its influence, all just and wise proposals for reforms in the land laws, including provision for allotment schemes calculated to foster home pride and the sense of ownership, and stimulate industry and thrift.

It may help in all practical ways the "garden city" and other movements aiming to place every man, metaphorically, "under his vine and under his fig-tree, from Dan even to [1] Beersheba".[1]

It is to watch the execution, by the local authorities, of the laws regulating the erection and maintenance in repair of dwelling-houses, and of those for the prevention of nuisances of all kinds.

It is to draw attention to the working principles and considerations which are essential to the placing of provident societies upon a sound and secure basis. It is to investigate the character, practical working and actual financial position of the various existing sick and burial clubs, insurance societies, co-operative societies, provident societies, loan societies, savings banks and other associations and report thereon in the public interest.

It is to carefully examine and report upon all intelligent suggestions and proposals, either of a co-operative or other profit-sharing character, for stimulating the energy and thrift of the wage-earning classes, and securing for them a fair and reasonable share of the profits of industry.

It may investigate and report upon the influence of trusts, syndicates, and other combinations on the well-being of the worker, of the people as a whole and of industry in general.

It is to discourage, with all the influence it can bring to bear, the resort to lock-outs and strikes; and to do all in its power to induce employers and employed to form joint boards

[1] 1 Kings iv. 25.

of conciliation, with a provision, in case of hopeless disagreement, for able and impartial arbitration.

It is to strenuously discourage the sentiment of military pride and glory, and all expressions of envy and jealousy between the nations provocative of war and its resultant frightful destruction of human life and of crushing financial burdens.

Should careful investigation by the committee show that the wage-earning and other members of any community are threatened with suffering by the stoppage of a useful industry through a capricious change of fashion, it is to draw the attention of Christians, and of the people generally, to the facts of the case, and to the desirability of their so arranging their requirements and purchases as to help to restore trade and prosperity to the threatened workers.

It may endeavour to lead Christians and the community generally to oppose on principle any reckless fashion which will throw out of work employés or others producing useful articles.

The Physical Well-being and Recreation Committee is to labour to secure for the whole community the best practicable facilities for rational, refreshing and restoring recreation.

It may urge upon local authorities and upon public benefactors the provision of an ample proportion—

Of area in the form of parks and gardens;

Of commons, greens and open spaces for games, gymnastics, and other healthful means of outdoor recreation and physical development;

Of shallow, instead of dangerously deep, sheets of water for swimming and boating in summer, and sliding and skating in winter;

Of museums and picture galleries; of reference and lending libraries; of reading-rooms and rooms for athletics and indoor games in unfavourable weather.

It may encourage and assist all wisely planned efforts to organise, for the poorer classes, continuation and other evening classes for technical and general teaching, as also

illustrated lectures, demonstrations, addresses and exhibitions, and musical, lantern and other entertainments of an edifying, instructive or elevating character.

It may help forward all movements (*a*) for permanently cheapening and expediting travelling between town and country; (*b*) for greatly lowering fares throughout the summer months, and thus—by making any summer week-day available for holiday excursions—obviating the packing of the people on certain days and at unreasonable hours into cheap trip trains, the consequent exhaustion, by excessive hours of work, of railway employés, and the crowding of the quiet country-side in such a way as to neutralise the pleasure and profit
1 derivable from entire change of scene and occupation.[1]

The committee may promote the establishment of new, and the development and increased utility of existing, country homes for poor convalescents, and for poor exhausted toilers in need of change.

It may aid and encourage local and other effort for the restoration and preservation of ancient footpaths, commons and village greens; for obtaining free public access wherever possible to heath, moor and glen; and for furnishing, at frequent intervals, comfortable seats for weary wayfarers.

2 ### Religious and Civil Liberty Committee.[2]

This committee is to strenuously promote, in all nations and countries, complete liberty of conscience for every person and association; such liberty to include—

[1] "Come ye yourselves apart into a solitary place, and rest awhile" (Mark vi. 31).

[2] "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your teacher, and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father on the earth: for one is your Father, who is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your master, *even* the Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Matt. xxiii. 8-12).

"Masters, render unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven" (Col. iv. 1).

(*a*) The right of private and public worship ;

(*b*) The right to advocate and propagate all religious views and practices which do not morally corrupt the individual or infringe upon the religious liberties or civil rights of others ;

(*c*) For all denominations and their members, in all respects, complete equality before the law and an absolutely equal attitude towards them on the part of all public functionaries.

It is to inculcate the principle that no individual should be under civil disability of any kind on account of his creed, sect, party, race, caste or colour, and that all offices and positions in the State should be open equally to all persons of ability and good moral character.

The committee is to do its utmost to make such complete religious liberty and equality a recognised part of the law of nations, and to induce every nation and community to make it a cardinal principle of its legislation and policy.

Recognising (*a*) that no nation, which unmistakably demands it, can be justly refused the control of its own destinies if it be able and willing to guarantee complete religious and civil liberty and equality to all its people ; (*b*) that no man has a right to enslave or oppress his brother, the committee is to do all in its power, by just and wise means, to help forward the liberation of all oppressed or down-trodden nationalities, communities and individuals.

It is to endeavour, through the most influential channels, to persuade oppressors of the sin and folly of their policy, and of the blessed results which would flow from a humane and liberal treatment of their subjects ; and, wherever it would be wise to do so, it is to try to bring to bear upon them the full force of public opinion. It is to heartily second and support the efforts of those societies whose object is the extinction of

" Is not this the fast that I have chosen ? to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the bands of the yoke, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke ? " (Isa. lviii. 6).

slavery and the slave trade, or the protection of aboriginal races from moral corruption and debasement as well as from fraud and oppression.

With the aim of promoting good government everywhere in local and national affairs, and the carrying of reforms for removing unjust or unwise disabilities and other evils, the committee may advocate the adoption, in the case of all public administrators or governing bodies, of such systems of government and of election, appointment and retention of office as will tend to maximise the honour of public service, to place the helm in the hands of men of the highest integrity and ability, to keep the latter in touch with the real needs of every section of the community, and—in the spheres or departments entrusted to them—to constantly stimulate them to excel in efforts for the public weal.

1 ### Meetings Committee.[1]

The Meetings Committee is at the earliest practicable moment to provide, and take permanent charge of, an Ecclesia house near the centre of the city, furnished with a library and reading-room, rooms for writing, for conversation, and for the transaction of the business of the committees; and also having, in connection with it, halls of sufficient size for the meetings of the members of the Ecclesia and for its evangelistic and other gatherings. The library and reading-room are to be supplied with high-class standard works and treatises, volumes on missionary and other Christian work, books of reference, journals, magazines and other desirable literature.

[1] "He appeared to above five hundred brethren at once" (1 Cor. xv. 6).

"And the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them" (Acts vi. 2).

"If therefore the whole Ecclesia be assembled together," etc. (1 Cor. xiv. 23).

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting *one another*; and so much the more, as ye see the day drawing nigh" (Heb. x. 25).

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Hallelujah: for the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigneth" (Rev. xix. 6).

The committee is also to provide all needed temporary room accommodation in other places and make the necessary arrangements for the holding of meetings therein, in connection with the work of the various departments of the Ecclesia, as occasion may require.

On receiving an intimation from any committee, or from the Joint Board, or the Referendum Council, that a meeting is to be convened, the Meetings Committee or its representative is forthwith to make suitable provision for it, and to announce it and its object in the *Ecclesia Journal*, or elsewhere, as may be deemed best by the conveners.

The Meetings Committee is, in each case, to make such arrangements for the meeting as will best meet the views and wishes of the conveners, as far as these are practicable; and (subject to the due observance of the by-laws ruling such meetings) it is to leave its direction and control entirely in their hands.

The Meetings Committee is to draw up by-laws for the orderly conduct of all meetings of the Ecclesia, and for the regulation of its discussions, debates and other proceedings thereat.

It is to do all in its power to promote the cultivation of the practice of discussion in the Christian spirit and temper.

Journal and Publication Committee.[1]

The Journal and Publication Committee is to make all needful arrangements for editing and issuing, weekly or at shorter or longer intervals, free to the members, a journal of the Ecclesia.

[1] "Go to thy house unto thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and how he had mercy on thee. And he went his way, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel" (Mark v. 19, 20).

"For from you hath sounded forth the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth; so that we need not to speak anything" (1 Thess. i. 8).

"Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world" (Ps. xix. 4).

This journal, besides reporting the proceedings of the different committees, and of the various meetings of the Ecclesia, is to be a medium for the free and fair expression of the convictions, opinions and sentiments of all members of the Ecclesia, and of the views and policy of its committees and of candidates for office.

It is to be the official organ of the Ecclesia. All official notices and announcements are to appear in it, and such publication is to be regarded as the personal notification of each member of the Ecclesia whom it may concern.

It is to contain news, articles, correspondence, papers and matter of all other kinds dealing with, or referring to, facts, developments, questions, investigations, arguments and considerations bearing upon the spiritual and physical well-being of men and the glory of God, and which are of sufficient interest and importance to justify their insertion in its columns.

All controversies in the *Ecclesia Journal* are to be conducted throughout in the Christian spirit, and in conformity with by-laws for their regulation, to be framed by the committee.

The committee is to publish and issue to the members (*a*) the annual reports and financial statements of the several committees; (*b*) an annual list (revised by the Elections Committee) of all members, members of committees, and officers of the Ecclesia; (*c*) an annual edition (revised by the Conciliation and Arbitration Committee) of the by-laws of the Ecclesia.

The committee is to prepare and circulate, locally and generally at its discretion, pamphlets and other suitable literature explaining and advocating the Ecclesia movement.

The committee is to afford the other committees all reasonable and practicable help in the preparation, printing and publication of papers or documents of any kind, which any of them may deem it necessary or desirable to issue.

Finance Committee.[1]

A leading duty of the Finance Committee is to assist the various committees of the Ecclesia in raising the funds required by them to carry on their work, and to supplement their collections by its own direct efforts.

All Ecclesia subscriptions and donations, by whomsoever received, are to be forwarded to the Finance Committee. When they are contributed for the work of a given committee or for some specified object the Finance Committee is to hand them over to that committee or to the promoters of the special object; but when they are given without instruction it is to divide them amongst the several departments of the Ecclesia in the proportion of their respective needs.

It is to be understood that any moneys contributed for specified departments or objects, but which the committees or promoters of these shall declare to be in excess of their requirements, may be applied by the Finance Committee to Ecclesia departments or objects in actual need of help.

The Finance Committee is to keep accurate and complete accounts of all moneys it receives and of their disposal, as well as of its own income and expenditure as a committee.

It is to submit the same annually to the members with (*a*) a clear exhibit of the financial position of the Ecclesia; (*b*) a report commenting on the same; and (*c*) a careful forecast of the future financial situation. Should it deem it necessary or desirable, it is to present special financial statements or reports at any time of the year.

To guide the Finance Committee generally and also in its

[1] "I thought it necessary therefore to intreat the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your aforepromised bounty, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not of extortion" (2 Cor. ix. 5).

"Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the Ecclesias of Galatia, so also do ye. Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come" (1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2).

efforts to assist the committees to provide the income they may require, each committee, when the Finance Committee may desire it, is to give the latter full and unreserved information as to its financial position and expenditure, and as careful an estimate as practicable of its future money requirements.[1]

[1]

Salaries Committee.

To secure unity of system and practice throughout all departments, the Salaries Committee is to determine the amount of remuneration to be paid to all stipendiary officers and servants of the Ecclesia.

As some of the committees may find it necessary or expedient to ask one or more of their members to give their whole time to the work of their particular departments; as such members may, in some cases, have to relinquish their present incomes, and may thus require the means of support, what would otherwise be the invidious task of fixing the amount of salary to be paid to any of their own number is to be the function of this committee, elected by, and thus directly reflecting the views of, the members.

The powers of the Salaries Committee are to be limited to the fixing of the remuneration of stipendiaries; it is to have no voice whatever in regard to their appointment, or the termination or continuance of their engagements. No member of the Salaries Committee is to receive any stipend or remuneration from the Ecclesia.

The Salaries Committee, in investigating, for salary-fixing purposes, the extent and character of the work of the several committees' officers, may delegate two or three of its members to be present at as many meetings of such committees as it may deem desirable for the purpose; the delegates are not to take any part in the business of such meetings.

The committees and their officers are at all times to give

[1] See p. 261.

the Salaries Committee whatever information and assistance it may find necessary in its investigations.

Audit Committee.[1]

An Audit Committee is to be elected to check the accuracy of the accounts of each of the committees, of the Joint Board, of the Referendum Council, and of all officers of the Ecclesia; and to prescribe to them a readily intelligible, and, as far as practicable, uniform method of keeping the same.

It may when practicable audit these accounts from time to time throughout the year, so that, after the year has closed, little will remain to be done; and there will be nothing to prevent the publication, in accordance with the by-laws, of the financial statements of all the committees within sixteen working days after the close of the year.

It may, for this purpose, inspect all their accounts and financial arrangements as often as it may deem necessary.

The Audit Committee is to frame regulations for procedure in taking money collections, receiving and accounting for contributions, entering into contracts, giving orders for work or materials, making payments and buying, selling, valuing or otherwise dealing with property for the Ecclesia—so far as the monetary part of all such transactions is concerned.

The Audit Committee is to submit an annual report to the whole Ecclesia.

Trust Committee.

The entire non-denominational property of the Ecclesia as a federation is to be vested in the members, for the time being, of the Trust Committee, the said property being held by them as a committee of trustees, on behalf of the members of the Ecclesia, in trust for the respective proper and constitutional uses thereof and for the quadrennial electoral term only.

[1] "For we take thought for things honourable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men" (2 Cor. viii. 21).

The Trust Committee is to register the Ecclesia under the provisions of the appropriate Act or Acts of Parliament, securing to it all necessary or desirable rights and powers as a legal corporation.

Elections Committee.[1]

The arrangements for the admission of every Ecclesia member, and for the election or appointment of the members of every Ecclesia committee and other body, and of every officer in the Ecclesia, are to be made and conducted by the Elections Committee in conformity with by-laws to be framed by it.

The Elections Committee is to be assisted by a body of election officers—deputies and registrars (see p. 310 *seq.*)—who are to act under its regulations and directions.

It is to have charge of the official roll of members of the Ecclesia, and is to furnish annually to the Journal and Publication Committee for publication an alphabetical list of the names and addresses of all members, as well as of all members of committees and officers.

All objections to candidates for membership, and all charges against existing members, are to be made in writing, and handed to the Elections Committee, which is to submit them for decision to the Conciliation and Arbitration Committee.

The Elections Committee is to carry into effect all such decisions of the Conciliation and Arbitration Committee.

Joint Board.

The Joint Board, consisting of the membership of all the committees of the Ecclesia, is to deal with the few recurrent matters (such as deputational visits or written communications to or from the Ecclesia as a unit) which equally concern the committees as a whole, and which are not covered by the functions of the individual committees.

The Joint Board being, however, a very large body, is to

[1] "Doing nothing by partiality" (1 Tim. v. 21).

have an executive consisting (*a*) of the chairmen of the departmental committees, (*b*) of the denominational representatives forming the Home Evangelisation Committee.

Neither the Joint Board nor its executive is to interfere in any way whatever (*a*) with the internal business of any of the committees, they being responsible to the members of the Ecclesia only; (*b*) with matters or questions which are outside its sphere as agent of such committees for their necessary joint business only.

The executive of the Joint Board is to keep in touch with the latter on all its matters and affairs, loyally give effect to its directions and policy, and act generally as its instrument. All letters and other communications upon matters within the province of the Joint Board are to be addressed to its secretary, who is to reply to them under the executive's instructions.

The Joint Board is to be convened when one-tenth of its members send a signed requisition to its secretary to that effect.

The Joint Board is to submit to the Ecclesia an annual report and financial statement covering its work and monetary transactions during the year.

Referendum Council and Referendum.

All matters and questions which are outside the province of every departmental committee, of the Joint Board, and of the separate denominations, but which nevertheless require to be dealt with by the Ecclesia as a whole, are, as they arise, to be considered and discussed by the Referendum Council, which is then to submit its conclusions and recommendations thereon to a referendum meeting of all the Ecclesia members.

The referendum meeting, after considering the conclusions and recommendations of the Referendum Council, is, by majority vote, either to adopt them in some form and authorise the Council to carry them into effect, or to take such other

course with regard to the subjects in question as may seem to it to be expedient.

Any official action upon its conclusions by the Council *per se* without authorisation by a Referendum vote is *ultra vires* and destitute of authority and validity.

The Referendum Council is to be composed (*a*) of the various ministers and Church elders or officers who are members of the Ecclesia, and (*b*) of the members of the various departmental committees. Being a very large body, the Referendum Council is to have an executive acting under its direction, and consisting of the chairmen for the time being of the departmental committees and the denominational representatives for the time being to the Home Evangelisation Committee.

The Referendum Council is to be convened by the executive when a requisition has been received by its secretary, signed by not less than 10 per cent. of the members of the Ecclesia, or of those of the Council itself, expressing the conviction that some particular matter or question demands the consideration of the Council and of the Referendum.

The Referendum Council is not to be convened by less than seven days' notice.

The Referendum is not to be convened by less than seven days' notice.

The executive is to lay the particular matter before the Council meeting. Afterwards, under the Council's direction, it is (*a*) to convene the referendum meeting of the members of the Ecclesia; (*b*) to submit the matter with the Council's conclusions and recommendations to such meeting; (*c*) to carry into effect the Referendum's decision thereon.

Should two or more matters or questions be submitted to a referendum meeting they are to be voted upon separately and not *en bloc*.

If a body of requisitionists ask that the mind of the electorate on the questions to be submitted to it be declared

not at a referendum meeting, but in the voting book at the quadrennial elections, then the Council is (*a*) to publish its own conclusions on the questions in the *Ecclesia Journal;* (*b*) to clearly, succinctly and constitutionally (under the supervision of the Conciliation and Arbitration Committee) draft the questions to be voted on, so that every elector may be left wholly without doubt as to their meaning, and be enabled by a simple "Yes" or "No" vote to register his convictions as to the true course for the Ecclesia to take in the matter.

Should a matter be brought before the Referendum Council, the principles underlying which have already been clearly and definitively laid down by the Referendum, then the Council is not to convene the latter to deal with it, nor to submit the matter to an Ecclesia vote at the quadrennial elections, but is to take the necessary action in conformity with such principles.

Any resolution, duly lodged by 10 per cent. of the members of the Ecclesia, to form a new departmental committee, or to alter the scope of, or to extinguish, any existing departmental committee, is to be submitted by the Council together with its own conclusions thereon to a referendum meeting. A referendum meeting to deal with any such matter is, however, to be convened only after three months' notice of the resolution embodying the proposal has been published by the Referendum Council.

At meetings thus convened, departmental committees may be elected, the elections being by proportional representation, the persons chosen, however, being elected only for the remainder of the quadrennial term. At the next quadrennial elections all new permanent committees are to be filled by election in the ordinary way.

Referendum meetings are to be empowered to elect committees for temporary work.

Any resolution, duly lodged by 10 per cent. of the members

of the Ecclesia, to alter the by-laws defining the fundamental object of the Ecclesia or the conditions of membership in it, is to be voted on by the Referendum twelve months after its publication by the Referendum Council.

Any resolution, duly lodged by 10 per cent. of the members of the Ecclesia, to dissolve the Ecclesia and dispose of its property, is to be voted on by the Referendum twelve months after its publication by the Referendum Council.

The executive of the Referendum Council is to comply with any written request of twenty-five or more members of the Ecclesia for the convening of a non-resolution meeting or conference of the members opening with an address, lecture or paper on any subject, matter or question which is outside the province of every departmental committee and of the Joint Board, but which may reasonably be regarded as within the sphere of the Ecclesia.

Notices of all (*a*) Referendum Council and referendum meetings, and all (*b*) Referendum questions for decision at a coming quadrennial election are to be published by the Council in the *Ecclesia Journal* at the earliest practicable moment, and, when the notified date is distant, sufficiently often in the interim to serve as a reasonable reminder.

The Conciliation and Arbitration Committee is to be present at all meetings of the Referendum Council and the Referendum to decide constitutional questions, and to ensure that every resolution submitted is drafted with perfect clearness and on constitutional lines.

The function of the Referendum Council being simply to give its advice on Ecclesia matters and questions arising outside the spheres of the departmental committees and of the Joint Board, it is to have no control, authority or supervision whatever over these bodies, they being responsible solely to the constituency of the Ecclesia, from whom alone they received their powers.

The Referendum Council, in common with the Joint Board

and all the committees, is to submit to the Ecclesia an annual report and financial statement covering its work and monetary transactions (if any) during the year.

Annual Messenger of the Ecclesia.

There is to be an Annual Messenger of the Ecclesia.

After the opening of the annual reunion meeting of the members he is to deliver an address. In the preparation of such address it is assumed that he will be helped by the earnest prayers of all members of the Ecclesia.

Having prayerfully sought the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and studied the signs of the times[1] both within and without the Ecclesia in the light of "the word of Christ,"[2] he is humbly, faithfully and fearlessly to endeavour to convey a message of encouragement and warning to every individual member and to the whole Ecclesia.

During his year of office, and with a view to placing himself in touch with the spirit and work of the various departmental committees, the Annual Messenger is to be empowered to be present at any of their meetings, and of those of the Joint Board and the Referendum Council and their executives (but not to take part in their business); and they are to afford him every facility and assistance in any inquiries he may make with that object.

Appointments.

Appointment of Joint Board.

Immediately after the quadrennial election of the departmental committees, their members (with the exception of those of the Conciliation and Arbitration Committee, see by-law, p. 269) become the Joint Board; and their elected chairmen, in conjunction with the denominational representatives forming the Home Evangelisation Committee, become *ex officio* the Joint Board's executive.

[1] Matt. xvi. 3. [2] Col. iii. 16.

The new executive is forthwith to elect its chairman, treasurer, and secretary, who are to hold these positions on the Joint Board for the ensuing twelve months, but are to be eligible for re-election.

Appointment of Referendum Council.

Immediately after the quadrennial election of the departmental committees, their members, in conjunction with the ministers and Church elders or officers who are members of the Ecclesia, become the Referendum Council. The chairmen of the departmental committees, in conjunction with the denominational representatives on the Home Evangelisation Committee, become *ex officio* the Referendum Council's executive.

The new executive is, forthwith, to elect its chairman, treasurer, and secretary, who are to hold these positions on the Referendum Council for the ensuing twelve months, but are to be eligible for re-election.

ELECTIONS.

Election of Annual Messenger of the Ecclesia.

The Annual Messenger for each year is to be the chosen representative of one of the denominations. The order of the succession of denominational representation is to be ascertained once for all by the Elections Committee, by the lot in prayer, previous to the first of the quadrennial elections. The Ecclesia members of each of the four denominations whose names first appear in the lot are respectively, at the first election for the quadrennial term, to elect their representative for the particular year of the quadrennial period—first, second, third or fourth—which has fallen to them; no members of other denominations are to take part in that election of Annual Messengers.

The Ecclesia members of the four denominations whose names in the lot next follow those of the first four are

similarly to elect their representatives, at the next quadrennial election, for their respective years; and so on until the rota has been completed, after which the cycle of denominational representation is to be repeated in the same succession.

In order to make full provision for the possible death, resignation or incapacitation of one or more of the four Messengers elected for the quadrennial term, not less than seven persons from each of the four electing denominations are to offer themselves as candidates for the office at each quadrennial election.

The candidate receiving the highest number of the votes of his denomination is to be the Messenger for such denomination's year. Should he during that year vacate the office, the candidate receiving the next highest number of votes is to become the Messenger; the one coming next to him again is in like case to take the office, and so on.

The six candidates receiving successively the next highest numbers of votes to those received by the elected Messenger are to be termed the Vice-Messengers of the denomination.

If, after the voting, two or more candidates are found to have an equal claim to the Messengership, the question who is to take the office is to be decided by the lot in prayer.

Election of the Committees.

Election Principles and Regulations.

The members of the committees are to be elected directly to their specific departments of administration by the whole constituency of the Ecclesia.

All persons elected are to be elected for four years only; but they are again to be eligible for election.

All the elections are to be held quadrennially and on one day.

Each committee is to be composed of seven persons.

The elections are to be based on the principle of proportional representation, so as to allow every section or school

of thought or policy in the Ecclesia desiring representation upon a committee to be represented thereon in proportion to its numbers: provided always, that such section is numerous enough to constitute a seventh of the electors voting and thus to enable it to elect at least one of the seven members of which a committee is composed.

As no section before the election knows its numerical strength; as it is possible that some one section may be so largely supported that its candidates may get nearly all the votes; and as no section should place the Ecclesia in difficulty by failing to provide sufficient candidates to take all the seats which fall to it; each section must put forward as many candidates as there are seats to be filled on the committee, *i.e.*, seven.

Each group of seven or more candidates is to lodge with the Elections Committee a signed election address stating their objects and policy in seeking election, and headed by a sectional name; the address, with the candidates' names in their order as signed, is to be published in the *Ecclesia Journal*.

A candidate for a committee can stand for only one of the sections offering themselves for such committee.

All persons who are on the roll of membership of the Ecclesia (except minors, who are neither to be candidates nor voters) are to be eligible for candidature.

Election to one committee is not *ipso facto* to disqualify for election to other committees, but, in order that there may be no possible ground for charging any committee with preferential treatment of any other, no member of any one of the following committees may also be a member of another: Members' Aid, Meetings, Journal and Publication, Finance, Salaries, Audit, Elections.

There is to be no official nomination of candidates by members, it being assumed that any seven or more members of the Ecclesia jointly coming forward to secure the repre-

sentation of a section, by signing a candidature form and issuing an election address, are themselves a sufficient guarantee of their responsibility in the matter.

The voting for all committees (and for all offices in the Ecclesia) is to be by ballot.

Every member of the Ecclesia is to have one vote for one representative on each committee.

The foregoing regulations are to be modified as follows in the case of the Conciliation and Arbitration Committee and the Home Evangelisation Committee:—

These committees, being composed of denominational representatives, are not to be elected by the members of the Ecclesia as a whole, but by them in their *denominational* capacity, every denomination electing one representative on each committee.

There are to be the following further modifications of the electoral arrangements in the case of:—

(*a*) The Conciliation and Arbitration Committee.—This committee of denominational representatives, being a body of judges guided solely by known and unchanging *principles*, is to be made entirely independent of varying views of *policy* and sentiment on the part of members.

Accordingly, no member of the committee is to be removed except in the case of proved moral, mental or physical incapacitation. On the expiration of each quadrennial term all its capable members in good standing are to be reappointed.

To provide for the eventuality of the death, resignation or incapacitation of any of the denominational representatives, not less than seven candidates from each denomination are, at the first election for the quadrennial term, to offer themselves for the committee.

The candidate receiving the highest number of the votes of his denomination is to be the latter's permanent representative.

The six non-elected candidates of the denomination who

receive the next highest numbers of its votes are to be its vice-representatives till the end of the first quadrennial term. During such term, should the representative vacate his office through any cause, they are, in the order of the votes cast for them, to be prepared to take his place.

At the second and every subsequent quadrennial election not less than seven candidates from each denomination are to offer themselves as denominational vice-representatives to the committee for the ensuing quadrennial term. The seven who receive the highest numbers of their denomination's votes are to be its vice-representatives during the quadrennial term, and are, in the order of the votes cast for them, to be prepared to take the office of representative should it be vacated from any cause.

As the members of the Conciliation and Arbitration Committee are not subject to periodical election, and as it is thus at all times left to themselves to decide any question as to the continued fitness and capacity for office of each of their number, it is understood that they are all, always, to be influenced in this matter both by a profound sense of responsibility to God for the efficiency of their work and by a truly loyal and honourable concern for the committee's judicial reputation.

Each of them is accordingly to retire from office either :—

(i) When he is aware of a sufficiently serious and permanent lessening or impairment, from whatever cause, of his capacity for service.

Or (ii) when he has personally failed to realise this, and his colleagues—after jointly and most carefully and conscientiously discussing the question in his presence—have by a majority vote expressed their conviction that incapacitation exists, and have, in the kindest and most brotherly way, conveyed to him their conclusion that he should be relieved of official duty.

The principle that "The spirits of the prophets are subject

to the prophets,"[1] is then to be recognised and acted upon by the failing member. [1]

(*b*) The Home Evangelisation Committee.—Not less than seven candidates from each denomination are to offer themselves for this committee at each quadrennial election.

The candidate receiving the highest number of the votes of his denomination is to be the latter's representative to the committee for the quadrennial term.

The six non-elected candidates receiving the next highest numbers of votes are to be the denomination's vice-representatives for the same period, and, in the event of the representative vacating his office either by death, incapacitation or resignation, they are to be prepared, in the order of the votes cast for them, to successively take the vacant post.

The proportion of votes cast for each section of candidates on the total vote determines the number of seats on the committee that are to be allotted to it.

Let it be assumed, for example, that four sections have put forward candidates for a committee.

Total votes polled for :—

Section A's candidates.	Section B's candidates.	Section C's candidates.	Section D's candidates.	Total votes polled for all the candidates.
801	341	1,356	1,002	3,500

Section.		Seats.		Seats.
A	$\frac{801}{3500}$ths of	7	=	1·602
B	$\frac{341}{3500}$ths of	7	=	·682
C	$\frac{1356}{3500}$ths of	7	=	2·711
D	$\frac{1002}{3500}$ths of	7	=	2·005
				7·000

[1] 1 Cor. xiv. 32.

Thus whole numbers of seats have been received by A (one seat), C (two seats) and D (two seats); and the fractions account for two other seats.

After assigning the whole seats to their respective sections, the remaining seats required to make up the complement of the committee are to be allotted to those sections whose fractions of seats are largest and thus come nearest to whole seats. C and B accordingly each receive one of the complemental seats.

Section	A	has now therefore	1	seat
,,	B	,, ,,	1	,,
,,	C	,, ,,	3	seats
,,	D	,, ,,	2	,,
			7	,,

Should any two or more sections have equal claim to an unallotted seat, the question which section is to have it is to be decided by the only known equitable method, *i.e.*, by the lot in prayer, the section whose name first appears after the casting of the lot being declared to have obtained it.

The seats received by each section are to be given to those candidates of the section who have received the highest numbers of its votes, whatever such numbers may be.

For example, section C received three seats. On examination it is found that its seven candidates received :—

	Votes.
Deane	82
Carter	14
Kingsley	699
Mason	11
Woodford	532
Tryon	9
Weston	9
	1,356

Kingsley, Woodford and Deane are therefore elected.

Should any two or more candidates of a section have equal claim to a seat, the question between them is to be decided by the method prescribed for dealing with equal claims between sections.

Should any member of an elective committee die, resign or become incapacitated for service during the period between two quadrennial elections, his place on the committee is to be taken by the highest of the non-elected candidates of his section.

Carter, it will be seen, was the highest of section C's non-elected candidates. Accordingly, should one of C's sitting members vacate his seat, Carter is to take his place.

If, during a quadrennial term, a larger number of the elected candidates of a section than can be replaced by its non-elected candidates should die, resign or become incapacitated, then its residue of members is to co-opt the additional members required to fill up its proportion of seats.

Assuming, for example, that a section put forward seven persons and had elected five members, and that of these four die or otherwise vacate their seats during the above period, two of these automatically become filled as occasion arises by the two non-elected candidates of the section, and the other two members are, in turn, to be co-opted by the remaining four members in each case.

If, at a quadrennial election, no new candidates offer themselves for a committee, then it is to be assumed that the existing members of the committee have the full confidence of the Ecclesia and they are *ipso facto* re-elected.

Voting.

The Voting Book and its Adjuncts.

The votes are to be given in the voting books prepared by the Elections Committee for the purpose.

The voting book is to be composed of oblong leaves bound together at one of their short sides. Each folio (*i.e.*, each two opposite pages) of the book is to be employed for registering the vote for one office only, or for one departmental committee only, or for one or more referendum questions.

The two leaves of each folio are to be headed in large type with the name of the office, departmental committee, etc., for which the vote is to be given.

The folio is to be divided by vertical lines into sections, according to the number of sections of candidates offering themselves for election. Each such section is to be headed by the distinctive name it has chosen, and is to contain the list of its candidates. The order of position of the sections on the folio is to be determined by the Elections Committee by the lot in prayer.

Every candidate's name on each folio is to have, in front of it, in clear type, a progressive number. Thus if on the first folio there are thirty-six candidates, they are to be numbered respectively 1 to 36; if forty-nine on the second folio, then 37 to 85, and so on.

The last folio in the voting book is to be reserved for referendum questions and is to be headed prominently with these words.

Each referendum question, like each candidate's name, is to have its progressive number.

After the name of every candidate on each folio there is to be a voting circle thus:—

(49) JOHN JONES..... ◯

In the circle for the particular candidate whom the voter selects he is to mark a cross thus: (X)

After each referendum question there are to be two circles lettered respectively "Yes" and "No". In one of these the voter is to mark his cross. Let it be assumed, for example,

that the progressive number of the first question is 421, then the first line would read:—

(421) "Are you in favour of, etc., etc.?"..... { "Yes" ◯ / "No" ◯

The two pages forming each folio are to be prominently headed with a large alphabetical letter: the two first pages with the letter A, the two second with the letter B, and so on.

A facsimile of the voting book (with the exception that it is made of differently tinted or figured paper) is to be issued to the electors as a "voting guide" previous to the elections. Its purpose is to familiarise the voter beforehand with the lists of candidates and the referendum questions, and with their respective positions in the voting book.

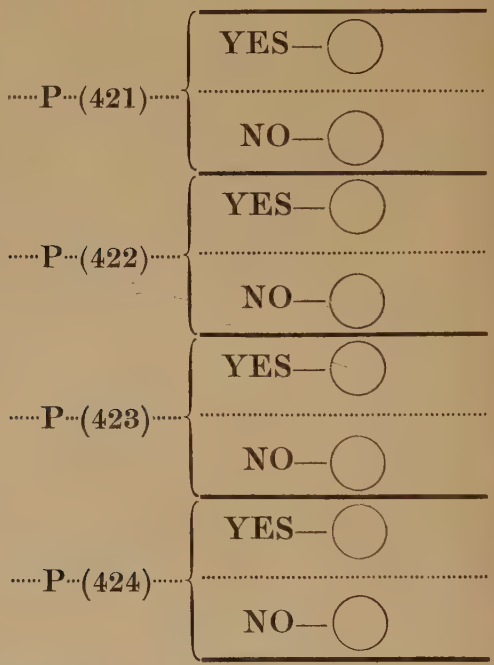
As it is of prime importance to maintain the secrecy of the ballot, voters are to be freed, in the following way, from the necessity of making any reminder marks in the voting guide opposite the names of the candidates for whom they intend to vote and thus possibly revealing their intentions:—

Each voting guide is to contain, for the elector's private use, a readily detachable piece of paper termed a "reminder slip," which he can take with him into the polling booth. This slip is to be ruled with as many horizontal lines as there are votes for candidates and votes on referendum questions; in other words, there is to be a line on the slip for each candidature folio of the voting book, and as many additional lines as there are referendum questions.

On the left hand of the first line of the slip there is to be a capital letter corresponding with the letter at the head of the first folio of the voting book, *i.e.*, the letter A. On the left of the second line there is to be the letter B, and so on throughout, each line having the letter of its corresponding folio in the voting book.

The lines for the referendum questions are in each case to

have first the letter of their folio, next the progressive number of the question, and next the two "Yes" and "No" voting circles. If, for example, on the last folio of the voting book —let it be assumed to be folio P—there are four referendum questions, numbered respectively 421, 422, 423, 424, then the last four lines of the reminder slip are to be lettered respectively:—



Before election day the voter, with the voting guide before him, may thus, if he desires, select his candidate from folio A, and enter such candidate's progressive number on the reminder slip opposite A. Turning next to folio B, he again chooses a candidate, marks that candidate's progressive number on line B of the slip, and so on till he comes to the last folio of the guide, lettered P, containing the four numbered referendum questions. Here, if a reminder is required, he turns to P on the slip. If on No. 421 question he

EXAMPLE OF A FILLED-UP REMINDER SLIP.

A	No vote[1]
B	*81*
C	*109*
D	*132*
E	*150*
F	*184*
G	*201*
H	*228*
I	*267*
J	*285*
K	*303*
L	*339*
M	*366*
N	*390*
O	*418*

P (421)	YES—	(X)
	NO—	( )
P (422)	YES—	( )
	NO—	(X)
P (423)	YES—	( )
	NO—	(X)
P (424)	YES—	(X)
	NO—	( )

[1] For this year the supposed elector's denomination does not vote on folio A.

has decided to vote "Yes," he marks his cross in its "Yes" circle. If on No. 422 question he intends to vote "No," he puts his cross in its "No" circle, and so on throughout the questions.

The first folio of the voting book (folio A) is to be for Annual Messenger of the Ecclesia, and these words, printed in large and prominent type, are to extend across the top of the folio.

Below this heading the folio is to be divided by vertical lines into four sections, headed respectively with the names of each of the four denominations whose turn (as fixed originally by lot) it is to elect the Messenger for its particular year of the quadrennial term. For example:—

Candidates for PRESBYTERIAN Year (1908).	Candidates for ANGLICAN Year (1909).	Candidates for BAPTIST Year (1910).	Candidates for WESLEYAN METHODIST Year (1911).

Under each of these denominational headings are to be printed the names of the several candidates of the particular denomination.

Below all, in large red type, are to be the words:—

At this election *Presbyterians, Anglicans, Baptists and Wesleyan Methodists only* are to vote for their respective Annual Messenger.

The second folio of the book (folio B) is to have the large type caption—

CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION COMMITTEE,

and below this are to be printed, in separate vertical divisions of the folio, each headed by the name of a denomination, the several lists of denominational candidates.

In the case of the second, and every subsequent quadrennial election, the words—

(Election of Denominational Vice-Representatives)

are to be prominently printed below the caption of the folio.

Across the top of the third folio of the book (folio C), in large type, are to be the words—

HOME EVANGELISATION COMMITTEE.

The folio is to be divided into vertical sections, each headed by a denomination's name and giving below the list of the denomination's candidates.

The succeeding folios of the book are to be for the votes for the ordinary departmental committees, which are elected by the members of the Ecclesia as a whole and not separately by its denominations, as such. In every case the folio is to be prominently headed with the name of the particular committee to be elected, and is to be divided into vertical divisions according to the number of sections offering themselves for election, each division bearing a sectional name and giving below it the names of the seven or more candidates forming its sectional group.

The last folio of the voting book is to be reserved for referendum questions arranged as specified in by-law on p. 304.

In view of the facts (*a*) that only four of the denominations vote at the quadrennial election for Messenger of the Ecclesia (each for its particular year of the quadrennial term), and (*b*) that the representatives to the Home Evangelisation Committee and the Conciliation and Arbitration Committee are elected by denominational votes, the voting book is to have a white space in the centre of the front page of its dark cover, and in the middle of this space the name of the denomination to which the voting station belongs is to be printed horizontally in conspicuous type. Below this there is to be sufficient space for the imprint of the election stamp. Higher up than the denominational name there is to be sufficient space for a printed adhesive label, which is to be affixed in the two special cases described in by-laws on p. 313.

The ballot box or boxes are to be sufficiently large to

amply meet all possible requirements. The lid of the box is to be so constructed that both the slit and the top of the box may be readily and securely closed in and locked by two different locks.

Election Officers and their Duties.

Votes are whenever possible to be taken in connection with every Church. The word "Church" throughout the election by-laws is to be understood to mean any locally organised and weekly assembling body of adult Christians, whose special object is the conversion of sinners and the building up of believers.

Should the election registrars for a Church be unable to procure in the premises of such Church the necessary accommodation for a voting station, then they are to make the needful arrangements for the reception of the votes of the members of such Church in the nearest convenient place. Every four years the Elections Committee is to appoint election officers to conduct the elections at the voting station of each Church.

The Elections Committee is to possess a list of all the Ecclesia members of each Church who are not incapacitated
1 for serving and who have not served in turn,[1] and out of this list it is to appoint twelve persons by the lot in prayer.

The first four of these are, as an associated group, to become part of a general body of deputies and vice-deputies of the Elections Committee. Out of this general body the Elections Committee is to appoint (by the lot in prayer), for each Church, one of the groups of four who are not members of such Church. The first two persons are to be deputies and the last two vice-deputies. The deputies are to superintend the arrangements for the voting of the Ecclesia members of the Church, and also to assist in the reception of the votes. In case either of the two deputies should, from

[1] See next page.

illness or other unavoidable cause, be unable to act, his place is to be supplied from the reserve of two vice-deputies, in the order of their names as received from the Elections Committee.

The several duties of the deputies are (*a*) to receive from the Elections Committee the voters' roll, the voting books, the voting stamp, the printed adhesive labels and the locked ballot box; (*b*) to take charge of the voting station, superintend the voting, and assist in the work of receiving the votes; (*c*) to give any necessary information to voters who do not understand how to vote; (*d*) after the voting to return the stamp, etc., the ticked-off voters' roll, the doubly locked ballot box, and the correct number of unused voting books, to the Elections Committee; (*e*) to join with the deputies, from the other voting stations, in counting the votes at the central rooms of the Ecclesia; (*f*) to help the Elections Committee generally, throughout the quadrennial term, in any election work, whenever it may desire their assistance.

The last eight of the twelve members of each Church appointed by lot are to be the election registrars and vice-registrars of that Church—the first four being registrars and the last four vice-registrars. The latter, like the vice-deputies, are to fill any unavoidable vacancies which may occur.

The registrars are to act under the superintendence of the deputies, and, in conjunction with them, are (*a*) to make the best practicable local arrangements for the reception of the votes; (*b*) on election day to identify the voters and receive their votes; (*c*) before the expiration of their term of office to prepare for the Elections Committee, for the next quadrennial elections, the revised alphabetical roll of the Ecclesia members of their Church.

Those of the twelve persons chosen from each Church who actually serve are to be exempted from the lot and liability to service in succeeding elections, until the list of the remain-

ing members of their Church has been exhausted, after which they are again to be liable to serve.

The Elections Committee, on a given date previous to the Elections, is to publish in the *Ecclesia Journal* :—

(*a*) An alphabetical list of the names of all Ecclesia members who have been appointed to election duty, giving, in each case, the reference number to the name in the undermentioned detailed list (*c*) of voting stations and election officers arranged under progressive numbers.

(*b*) An alphabetical list of the names of the voting stations, giving, in each case, the reference number to the name in the detailed list (*c*) of voting stations and election officers arranged under progressive numbers.

(*c*) A detailed list of the voting stations (with addresses) and of their election officers (with addresses) arranged under progressive numbers. In this list, after the name and address of each voting station, are to be given the name, address and function of each of the twelve officers (two deputies, two vice-deputies, four registrars and four vice-registrars) appointed for such voting station. In the case of each of the two deputies and two vice-deputies—for the reason given in by-law on p. 313—the name of the denomination is also to be given.

Thus any Ecclesia member who finds his name in alphabetical list (*a*) may, by means of its reference figure, at once ascertain in list (*c*) the voting station where he is to act and in what capacity, as also the names and offices of his eleven colleagues. In like manner, any member, by turning up the name of a voting station in alphabetical list (*b*), and its reference to list (*c*), may ascertain who are the election officers appointed for such voting station.

Immediately after the publication of these lists the first named of the two deputies is to convene a meeting of his five acting colleagues (one deputy and four registrars) to plan out the needful local arrangements for the voting in connection with their voting station.

Delivery of the Vote.

At the time and place appointed for the election the voter, having been identified by the registrars, has his name ticked off on the roll. A voting book is then imprinted with the election stamp and handed to him.

He retires with the book into a voting booth, and records his votes by marking on each folio, except the last one, a cross in the voting circle of the candidate he selects, and on the last folio a cross in the "Yes" or the "No" voting circle of each referendum question. He then closes the book, and after crumpling up his "reminder slip" and destroying it in the fire provided in the polling booth for the purpose, he deposits the voting book in the ballot box placed before the election officers.

Should any voter, for any reason, decline to deposit his voting book in the ballot box, he is to hand it back to the deputies who, keeping it closed, are, in his presence, to affix an adhesive label containing the printed word "cancelled" on the upper part of the white space in its cover, and then themselves deposit the book in the ballot box.

The following special course is to be taken by the registrars to provide for the voting of the two deputies when the latter are not members of the denomination to which the voting station belongs. They are in each case to imprint the election stamp on the voting book. They are next to affix above (*i.e.*, higher up than) the printed name of the denomination an adhesive label containing the printed name of *the deputy's denomination.* They are then to hand the book to the deputy, who is now to record his vote in it and deposit it in the ballot box.

At the hour previously notified the deputies are to close the voting station. They are next to add the number of the voters' names ticked off on the roll to the number of unused voting books, and compare the total thus ascertained with the number of the voting books in hand before the voting commenced.

They are then, forthwith, to take the ballot box and its adjuncts to the central rooms of the Ecclesia, where, under the direction of the Elections Committee, they are to join with the other deputies in counting the votes received from all the Churches.

Immediately after the ballot boxes are opened at the central rooms, the voting books they contain are in each case to be counted and the number marked upon the box. The books from all the boxes are then to be thoroughly mixed to prevent the possibility of its being traced how any elector has voted.

Should any voter give two or more votes where he should give only one, none of the votes are to be counted.

Any vote given by mistake either (*a*) for Messenger of the Ecclesia for a given year by a voter who is not a member of the denomination which alone elects to that office for such year, or (*b*) for a denominational representative to a committee by a voter who is not a member of such denomination, is not to be counted.

As a check, to ensure the timely detection of mistakes, the ticking off of the voters' names on the roll as they present themselves at the voting stations, and the subsequent entering and analysis of the votes in the results books at the central rooms, are to be done by the officers under the eye of two other persons. This precaution is also to be taken, as far as practicable, with all the other election operations and procedures.

All the election arrangements are to be of such a transparent, straightforward and thoroughly business-like character as to silence hostile criticism and serve, if need be, for a model in civil elections.

Preliminary Procedure.

Within twelve working days after the close of the year all the committees are to place their signed annual reports and audited financial statements[1] in the hands of the Elections Committee.

[1] See p. 289.

Within four working days after the receipt of these documents the Elections Committee is to publish them in the *Ecclesia Journal*, along with its own lists of the voting stations and their respective election officers.

Within six working days thereafter the signed candidature forms of the various sections of candidates, together with the signed election addresses, are to be placed in the hands of the Elections Committee.

Within four working days thereafter the election addresses of the various sections, each under its sectional name and over the signatures of the section's candidates, are to be published by the Elections Committee in the *Ecclesia Journal.*

Within six working days thereafter (*a*) the Elections Committee is to prepare the voting books and voting guides, and distribute the latter to the registrars (in each case through the medium of the two first registrars on the voting station list), and (*b*) the registrars are to deliver them to the Ecclesia members of their respective stations. The two first registrars are to be responsible for the distribution.

On the morning of the third working day thereafter—election day—the Elections Committee is to deliver the voting books and ballot boxes, etc., to the deputies of the respective voting stations (*i.e.*, to the two first deputies on the voting station list) and the elections are to be held on that day.

The results of the voting are to be published in the *Ecclesia Journal* in the first succeeding issue.

By the end of the first month in the year the candidates' addresses are thus published in the *Ecclesia Journal* and the results of the elections are declared within the first half of the succeeding month.

Assuming that, in a given town, a number of Christians have resolved to take the first step to form an Ecclesia—based *in its initial stages* on the foregoing principles and on the "suggested by-laws" as its *provisional* working scheme—a

temporary committee, composed of members of the different denominations, say three from each but with power to add proportionally to their number, would first be constituted (*a*) to make widely known ("by word of mouth," by the preparation and circulation of pamphlets and leaflets, or otherwise) the object of the movement, and to enlist for it the interest and sympathy of as many Christians as possible, both of
[1] "light and leading"[1] and of the rank and file; (*b*) to receive the names of all resident Christians in good standing willing to become members of the organisation. After a reasonably sufficient initial constituency had been enrolled, the Ecclesia would be formally launched at a general meeting of the members.

[2] At this gathering the Lord's supper would be celebrated[2] and two resolutions would be passed. The first would direct the temporary committee (*a*) to arrange and conduct the election, by the meeting, of a new and more widely representative temporary committee, (*b*) immediately after such election to dissolve.

The second resolution would direct and empower the new
[3] committee (1) to act as an Elections Committee[3] and to plan and carry out without delay the election, for the ensuing quadrennial term, of the departmental committees and of the four successive Annual Messengers, (2) immediately after such election to dissolve.

The working experience gained by the departmental committees during the four years' term would show how far it was necessary or desirable to recast the constitution to bring it more into line with apostolic governmental principles and more fully and faithfully to embody these in the by-laws.

[1] Gal. ii. 2.

[2] Matt. xxvi. 26-29; 1 Cor. xi. 26; Eph. v. 25, 26, 27; Rev. xix. 9; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8; xxxv. 19; Ezra vi. 13-22.

[3] See pp. 290 and 296 *seq.*

APPENDIX A[1]

Which Classes of Ecclesia Officers were Paid?

If we could divest ourselves of the familiarising influences of use and wont, and read without preconceived ideas the following passages:—

"Even so did the Lord ordain that they who proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel."[2]

"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially those who labour in the word and in teaching. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn. And the labourer is worthy of his hire."[3]

"And he gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ."[4]

"Look ye out therefore, brethren, from among you seven men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business."[5]

we would probably find more in them than many of us have hitherto recognised.

Do they not tell us (*a*) that the evangelist in the mission field is entitled to personal support; (*b*) that "elders that rule" include those who both preach and teach the Word, those who are pastors and teachers only,[6] and those who form departmental committees; (*c*) that the word "especially" appraises the work of the preaching and teaching elder more highly than that of the two remaining classes, even though these rule "well" in their less important spheres; (*d*) that the Greek word *timē*, signifying either "honour"

[1] Appendix to Chap. VII. [2] 1 Cor. ix. 14. [3] 1 Tim. v. 17, 18.
[4] Eph. iv. 11, 12. [5] Acts vi. 3. [6] Heb. xiii. 17.

in the ordinary sense, or "a price" to be paid, points to the latter in the case of preachers and teachers who (like evangelists in
[1] heathen lands) necessarily devote their whole time to their work?[1]

With regard to the pastor and teacher the question would at once arise: Can the work of the elder who is not a preacher and teacher but simply a pastor and teacher be done, and well done, if unpaid, *i.e.*, by men who have also to carry on a daily occupation?

That there is a very wide diffusion of the teaching gift is evident from the large proportion of day school and Sunday school teachers in Christian countries, and also from the consideration that Providence has manifestly designed all parents to be "pastors and teachers" of their children.

There are to-day not a few men and women, in charge of large adult Bible classes, who are to all intents and purposes "pastors and teachers". Further, there are numerous instances of persons in business occupations who are acting as successful pastors and teachers of congregations, and there might doubtless be many more if men with the teaching gift would train it and place it at the disposal of their Churches.

As the work of such men is unpaid and has no ecclesiastical character or atmosphere, it cannot be suspected of the "professional" motives ascribed at times even to the most unselfish paid ministers. Perhaps Paul had such volunteer "pastors and teachers" in mind when he wrote to the Thessalonians: "But, we beseech you, brethren, to know them that labour among you and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them exceeding highly
[2] in love for their work's sake".[2]

A profoundly important phase of the income question should not here be overlooked. We see the great apostle labouring both as *evangelist* and teacher in Corinth and Ephesus, supporting himself

[1] The meaning of the reference to the ox that "treadeth out the corn" can hardly escape us, *viz.*, that if a beast be taken off the pasture to work for man it must be supplied with the necessary food. And so, if a man be withdrawn from a bread-winning occupation to do the world's highest and most valuable work, he likewise must be provided with his daily bread. Again, if able and fruitful administration of *any* department of Ecclesia work entitles to "double honour," then "especially," as the apostle puts it, have those earned such recognition who have "well" done the *double work* of the preacher and the teacher. (Luke viii. 1-3, specially 3.)

[2] 1 Thess. v. 12, 13.

by the labour of his hands and (in the latter city) ministering to the necessities of them that were with him.[1] How much are we to-day [1]
denying ourselves in this way[2] to wipe out the guilt and shame of [2]
the fact that Christ's command, now nearly two millenniums old, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation," is still unexecuted in many vast and thickly peopled regions of the earth?

In nearly every modern Church there are a few men whose genial and kindly spirit, constant study of and reverence for "the Word of God," aptness to teach, ripe Christian experience and knowledge of the world have given them many of the qualifications of the elder described in 1 Tim. iii. 1-7 and Tit. i. 5-9. Such a body of "pastors and teachers," if directly elected by their Church, would—either in turn or as lieutenants of one of their number as leader—doubtless be able and willing to edify their fellow-members without payment, thereby in every city setting free a very large aggregate of money for home and foreign missionary work.

If a Christian Church's "fruit" does not mean its brilliant pulpit sermons but its roll of transfigured lives, what is there to hinder such a committee of spiritually qualified[3] though unpaid teachers (co- [3]
operating with other committees elected for a variety of purposes and all harnessed together as "a body" on the lines of 1 Cor. xii.-xiv.) saturating their fellow-members with the life-giving truths and principles of "the Word"?

Albeit the conventional pastoral system has made other arrangements all but unthinkable in Western lands, yet it does seem incredible that every little local body of intelligent, self-denying Christians, with the Gospels and Epistles in their hands, should, in presence of the awful needs of the heathen world, require a *paid* superintendent to lecture and supervise them, and be themselves unable out of simple love to Christ, to mutually edify one another as do the members of philosophical, engineering, chemical, geographi-

[1] Acts xviii. 1-3; xx. 33, 34.

[2] In New Testament and subapostolic times we know that the unpaid rank and file won numberless converts to the faith by their loving loyalty to the Master's injunction, "And he that heareth, let him say, Come"; and that, in our own day, far more work of this kind will have to be done, both at home and abroad if the world is to be evangelised in the pregnant century in which our lot is cast.

[3] Acts v. 13.

cal and other scientific societies, and as it is quite clear Christians actually did in apostolic days.[1]

If, concurrently with such a body of local pastors and teachers, a sufficient number of powerful Gospel preachers were maintained by the Ecclesia Evangelisation Committee of the city to evangelise each Church district in turn (the poor ones getting the same share of their services as the rich), then the converts made, lambs in the fold, would be tended and taught by the pastors and teachers in every Church.

The amount of valuable work which might be done by trained, earnest, unpaid helpers is indicated in the following account of a rational system now in operation in some parts of Australia:—

"Often a vast tract of country, containing many sections and farms and several hamlets, with a small town as centre, is manned by one minister. There is a Presbyterian minister on the Darling Downs, Queensland, who has nearly a dozen preaching stations in addition to the central town, and who is thus able to minister to a vast area which would otherwise be neglected. In Scotland a dozen men would be required to do this one man's work. His method is simple. Most of his elders are speakers; he trains speakers in his Christian Endeavour; he encourages every educated young man with the gift of speech to prepare himself for the pulpit. He has thus a large staff of lay assistants—nearly a dozen—who for the love of the work administer to the wants of the district, under their minister's supervision.

"This case is not isolated—though there are not many districts as large—but it is an example of the principle on which nearly all country ministers, Presbyterian as well as Methodist, do their work. There are great potential forces in our congregations which are not brought into operation where there is a feeling against lay assistance" (*British Weekly*, 11th Oct., 1906.)

[1] 1 Thess. v. 11. See 1 Cor. xii. 4 *seq.*, xiv. 26 *seq.*, and the whole tenor of chaps. xii., xiii., xiv. How completely the "one-man ministry" of the modern Christian synagogue has swept away the most valuable feature of Jewish synagogue worship and (in the case of Nonconformist Churches) monopolised everything in "divine service" but the singing of the hymns, will be seen at a glance on reading such passages as Matt. xii. 9-11; Luke iv. 16, 17; Acts xiii. 14-16; xvii. 10-12, 16, 17; xviii. 1-4.

APPENDIX B[1]

A Suggested Solution of the Religious Education Problem

In view of the momentous issues for good or ill which hang on the national decision of the religious education question, no apology seems needed for any scheme for securing, for the children of all parents who desire it, unfettered Christian teaching on just and practical lines.

The following propositions would, it is believed, be endorsed by all evangelical Christians: The first object of education is the formation of character. The teaching of the truths and principles of the Word of God is the most important factor in character-building. Such truths and principles should be taught by persons whose own lives have been profoundly influenced by them, whose example will second their precept, and whose whole character and conduct will produce the Christian atmosphere which is found so powerful for good in missionary schools and colleges in heathen lands. As it is obvious that neither the State nor the municipality can select teachers of this type, they must be provided in another way.

When a local authority takes over an undrained and unpaved street it notifies the adjoining house owners that they must first drain and pave it in a specified standard manner, or in default that it will carry out the necessary work at their respective costs. In the parallel case of a State resolving that all its children shall be educated, and directing each local authority to levy rates (to be supplemented by Government taxes) to pay for the necessary school buildings and services of teaching staff, any section or denomination of its citizens has clearly a just claim to the refundment of its education rates and taxes, if it can prove that it will expend the amount in efficiently supplying not only the teaching which the State can

[1] See p. 218.

give, but also the religious teaching which, though essential to the formation of character, cannot be provided by the State.

Assuming that the Free Church denominations (and in numerous localities *all* the Evangelical denominations) would agree to act together as a body in administering the Christian teaching of the children of those parents who might entrust them to their care, then their members (*i.e.*, communicants) could proportionally elect an interdenominational School Management Committee to control and direct the teaching work. The members of other denominations, *e.g.*, Jews and Roman Catholics, would doubtless also require the refundment of their educational rates and taxes, and elect School Management Committees to direct their children's teaching.

Concurrently, the ratepayers of the whole district would (proportionally) elect an Education Committee—(1) To fix the local education rate and receive the Government's contribution from the taxes; (2) to provide and maintain the school buildings required by the denominational committees, and to pay over to the latter the necessary teaching and other expenses of the schools; (3) to secure to every school a clear tenth of its daily time for stated or formal religious teaching; (4) to fix the scale of remuneration of all teachers and the periods of their engagements, leaving, however, their selection, control and dismissal, as well as all matters and questions affecting religious teaching, entirely in the hands of the School Management Committees; (5) to require the latter in the following matters:—

(*a*) Morals—To give the best and most approved moral teaching, and to maintain perfect discipline and order. To prohibit all teaching having an immoral character or tendency.[1]

(*b*) Sanitation—To maintain the best and most approved sanitary conditions.

(*c*) Secular and technical instruction—To give the best and most approved teaching in all the branches prescribed.

The Education Committee would be empowered to deal only with School Management Committees who were elected directly and proportionally by the members of the denominations or of other communities associating themselves for educational purposes, and who furnished unquestionable evidence that a sufficient number of parents

[1] No denomination, for example, should be permitted to teach the violation of the second commandment (Exod. xx. 4), nor the doing of evil that good may come (Rom. iii. 8).

were anxious to entrust the education of their children to their care.

A cast-iron curriculum, as regards even the secular subjects, should not be prescribed by the Education Committee; it should allow the School Management Committees a large latitude in experimenting, and content itself with obviously excellent educational *results*.

As hopeless complications would confront any attempt to ascertain (*a*) the amount of each denomination's or denominational group's contribution to the education rate of its locality, plus (*b*) the amount which, as a contributor to the general taxation of the country, it could claim to be refunded as its quota of that portion of the national taxes which the Chancellor of the Exchequer disbursed for education, the following course might be adopted to effect the equitable refundment of the two amounts:—

Taking the whole country as an aggregate, it would be rightly assumed that each of its denominations contributes an equal quota, per scholar, of educational rates and taxes; and therefore that in each Local Government area each of the denominational School Management Committees would be entitled to the refundment of an equal amount per scholar under its care.

Accordingly, to obviate all local questions as to the denominations' proportions of the local education rate, and with them all necessity for passive resistance—(*a*) The whole amount of each Local Authority's education rate would be remitted to the National Board of Education and merged in a National Education Fund consisting of both rates and taxes; (*b*) out of such joint fund the Education Board would repay to each Local Authority's Education Committee an amount equal to that of the rate paid in by it plus its quota of the Government contribution from the taxes, the two amounts being separately specified.

Within the leading lines of this scheme various important subsidiary questions would obviously still remain to be dealt with, but as none of them presents any real difficulty they could be equitably disposed of immediately the fundamental principle of the scheme was accepted.

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APPENDIX C[1]

Christian Regenerative Influence (in Hospitals, Workhouses, Gaols, etc.)

The sick, the prisoner, and the pauper are much more likely to be impressed by warm-hearted ministrations of matured Christian men or women of high standing than by what is, too frequently, the mere perfunctory sermonising of stipendiary officials. "I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me" (Matt. xxv. 36).

The United States Government—driven by a long and melancholy experience of contractors' frauds in the supply of provisions to the Indian tribes dispossessed of their lands—accepted an offer from the Society of Friends to undertake the work. The result of the change was, it need scarcely be said, a most gratifying practical success.

"Mr. Bramwell Booth, Chief of the Staff, announces that the Salvation Army is willing to take complete control of the prisons, asylums and workhouses of any one town or city in the United Kingdom. He believes that the Army would be able to organise these institutions at half the present cost. To ensure a fair trial, the experiment should be spread over a period of three years" (*Alliance News*, 19th April, 1906, p. 249).

The marvellous influence of truly Christian ministration upon humanly hopeless criminals was exemplified in the experience of Dr. Colin Browning R.N., who from A.D. 1831 to 1848 was engaged as Superintendent of Convict Ships during the long voyages between England and Tasmania, being nine times entrusted with the direction of large parties of these wretched outcasts from their country. The voyages of convicts usually presented such scenes of horrible corruption and riotous insubordination that the transport

[1] See p. 278.

vessels were commonly spoken of as "floating hells". But Dr. Browning's parties formed a most remarkable contrast to the general rule.

He records of one of his later voyages: "The last words uttered to me by the prison officers at Millbank were designed to impress on my mind that the men destined for embarkation in the *Pestonjee Bomanjee* were a most depraved set, including some most desperate characters. A friend, moreover, advised me never to venture myself among them at night, or alone, or unarmed. Their character from England had reached Tasmania before they did, and the gentleman who came on board before debarkation told me that he understood that I had brought out the worst body of men that had ever been landed in the Colony."

The Doctor then says: "But I can speak with confidence and gratitude of their behaviour while under my authority, instruction and discipline. Not a lash was inflicted, not an iron was seen on the prisoners' decks. The behaviour of my men, after they had been a few weeks under Scriptural instruction, prayer and discipline, exceeded, in correctness and superiority of character, that of any other body of men ever committed to my care. Their advancement in Christian knowledge was amazing, though their fearful and most appalling ignorance of the Bible and of Redemption, when they came on board, was truly astounding and heartrending."

When this party (of 200) left Woolwich, for Hobart, 135 could neither read nor write. On their landing in the Colony all could read. Seventy-six had learnt to write, 39 had signed the "Total Abstinence," and 150 the "Temperance" pledge. All were supplied with a Bible or Testament. And the Doctor mentions: "Out of their few remaining shillings, the prisoners, without my knowledge, subscribed among themselves the sum of £7 8s. 10d., as an expression of their gratitude to the British and Foreign Bible Society. Had they possessed more money, the sum would have been greater. Many of them gave all they had left in my hands."

But one of his greatest triumphs was his voyage from Norfolk Island (of horrible history) to Tasmania, in charge of 346 "old hands". A number of these had agreed to take terrible revenge on some comrades who had been employed as constables over the others. But under the instruction and discipline of Dr. Browning this purpose was entirely abandoned. (Murder was a common

crime among the Norfolk Island convicts at that period.) The Doctor landed his large party at their destination without having had a single punishment. He remarks: "The men were given to me in double irons; I debarked them without an iron clanking among them. I am told this is the first and only instance of convicts removed from Norfolk Island having had their irons struck off during the voyage, and being landed totally unfettered. They are almost uniformly double-cross-ironed, and often chained down to the deck, everybody being afraid of them. I was among them at all hours, and the prison doors were never once shut during the day. To God be all the glory."

Three Governors of Tasmania—Sir John Franklin, Colonel George Arthur and Sir William Denison (all thoroughly practical and shrewd men)—expressed their high opinion of Dr. Browning and his system, and of its effects upon the *subsequent* behaviour of his convicts.

Dr. Browning's own convictions on the treatment of criminals are expressed in the following words: "We hear much of various systems of prison discipline, as the separate, the silent and the congregate systems, but unless the CHRISTIAN system be brought to bear, with divine power, on the understanding and consciences of criminals, every other system, professedly contemplating their reformation, must prove an utter failure. We willingly concede to various modes of prison discipline their just measure of importance, but to expect that human machinery, however perfect, can take the place of GOD'S OWN PRESCRIBED METHOD of reformation, involves not only ignorant presumption, but practical infidelity" (Extracts from a publication on *Christianity amongst Prisoners* issued by the Howard Association).

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